

PUNCH

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CHARIVARIA

MEMBERS of Parliament went on holiday without any assurance from Mr. Selwyn Lloyd about the safety of British subjects in the Lebanon. However, it was something to get a promise out of Mr. John Hare that, when business is resumed, a Protection Order will be made for the grey seals on the Farne Islands.

SIR WILLIAM ROOTES' firm rebuttal of a charge that our car-industry trade mission to Canada was nothing but "a tea-drinking" jaunt seemed rather unnecessary to anyone who has ever seen a car-industry trade mission in action.

Small Mercies Corner

"U.S. DOES NOT INTEND TO DROP PILOTED PLANES"
Daily Telegraph

POST OFFICE practice and procedure continues to receive invigorating shake-ups under the present inspired Postmaster-Generalship, the latest innovation being a greetings telegram form carrying the signs of the Zodiac as a decorative frieze. Recipients, as the

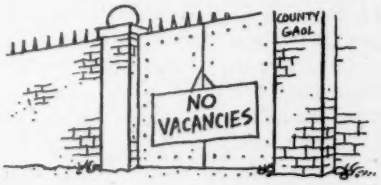


official statement says, "will be able to tell under which sign they were born"—and also, perhaps, to foretell what Mr. Marples will get up to next.

"WHAT will women do," asked Sir George Barnes at a recent teachers' conference, "with the extra twenty years' expectation of life they now enjoy?" Go on knocking them off, as usual.

A SOLUTION, at one stroke, to the whole wage-claim problem offered itself with the news that the busmen were demanding that their strike pay should be doubled. The only answer for any self-respecting worker when a request of this sort is turned down is to strike from the strike and return to work—when the shrewd employer will naturally offer the equivalent of the double strike pay, a handsome reduction on the work pay the worker struck against in the first place.

A PENALTY of six months' imprisonment, imposable on landlords infringing



the new Landlord and Tenant Bill, may at least make available more temporary housing accommodation.

OUR misconception of American life was shamefully re-emphasized when Stan Musial of the St. Louis Cardinals scored his three thousandth major league hit and got written up in the *Daily Express* as "the Stanley Matthews of baseball."

Sorry, No Facts

OVER Tunisia
Rumour couldn't be busier.
Malta?
The prophets falter.
Do you
Understand about the Kikuyu?
Or the role
Of de Gaulle?
Don't ask us
What's happening in Damascus.
You're readers:
Try the leaders.



Punch Diary

"IT is like Churchill in a way," says the *Mail*, along with other papers, of the dramatic reappearance of General de Gaulle. It is *not* like Churchill. Sir Winston, let me remind the *Mail*, was a parliamentarian of venerable longevity and a democrat to his fingertips when he emerged from his study to become First Lord of the Admiralty for the second time. Somehow I cannot imagine Churchill saying "One does not say 'Long live Churchill' when one is not on the side of the nation," or third personing himself as the embodiment of victory. Nor can I imagine Sir Winston threatening to return to his village to await the call—and what is more issuing his threat in anything resembling the General's impeccable French.

Ach, Weh!

UNDER Beschlagnahmeprotokoll No. 92404, I am sorry to report, a copy of *Punch* for January 15 this year has been seized by the East German Customs on the ground that *Literatur mit antidemokratischem Charakter ist zur Einführ nicht zugelassen*. Exactly which bit of literature was found to possess such an anti-democratic character the Customs men have not revealed: there is a rather flattering portrait of Bulge and Krush on page 115, and an account on page 116 of a business transaction in which a Russian trade delegate shows up in a poor light. To balance that there is a slight on the British aristocracy on pages 122–3, and a dig at the U.S. forces on page 120.

I am thinking of sending to this Customs office (whose address is in Karl-Marx-Stadt) a copy of the issue of April 30, which reproduces two cartoons from *Krokodil* and an article by a member of its staff. Would the *Einfuhr* of that be *zugelassen*, or would the inclusion of a piece on *The Nets at Lord's* be held still to tilt the scale on the *antidemokratisch* side?

First Things First

I NOTE with pleasure that Whitehall P.R.O.s are at last catching up with the realities of our times. The official biographical note released by the Commonwealth Relations Office on Sir John Maud's appointment as High Commissioner for Basutoland tells a distinguished story beginning at Eton and Oxford and proceeding impressively by way of Fellowships, Scholarships and Deanships into weighty ministerial posts, UNRRA and UNESCO conferences in Paris, Mexico, Istanbul, Beirut, Cairo and Florence, lecture tours in America and Italy, and the authorship of half a dozen thick and thoughtful books. In case none of this should call the man clearly to the public mind the note adds: "Sir John has been a member of the B.B.C. 'Brains Trust' . . ." This is a move in the right direction. Presently, as enlightenment strengthens, common sense will take complete command, and official biographies will *start* with TV triumphs and tail off into Eton, Oxford, administration and authorship.

On the Square

THE winner of the world draughts championship, hammered out in London last week, is likely to see his laurels fade sooner than those of the



"The shameless extravagance of having his initials everywhere"

"Herd laddie," as they called the Scotch champion James Wyllie, title-holder for over forty years from 1850 onwards. For some reason Scots have always been among the greatest masters; six of the recognized openings string themselves into a Song of Scotland:

Edinburgh, Kelso, Laird and Lady,
Glasgow, Fife and Ayrshire Lassie.

Perhaps there is something in the game that appeals to the Covenanter, for in the memorable words of an essay by Arthur Reisman, an acknowledged world authority, "educators see in draughts a ready medium for developing the faculties needed for life's rigours." And it's a clean sport; the same author rightly claims that "clergymen like to see the game played, knowing that the urge to gamble which debases so many amusements gets little impetus here."

Rabelaisian Yawns

SIR THEOBALD MATHEW, the Director of Public Prosecutions, has been saying that thirty years ago *Ulysses* was probably obscene but to-day it is not because it is totally unreadable. The logic of this expert opinion may be odd but the conclusion, that nobody who could read the book would suffer much harm from it, is sensible enough. However, what Sir Theobald seems to think is that *Ulysses* has become more unreadable as the years have gone by, though in fact experiments gain comprehensibility as they lose novelty. When Sir Hartley Shawcross was Attorney-General he was questioned about *The Naked and the Dead* and also took the line of attacking its readability. This method of protecting public morals could be extended. Films could be given an X certificate for being sexy-and-exciting and, say, a D for being sexy-and-dull. And the censor's certificate could warn the audience that they would never be able to sit through what followed.

No Offence

JOHN BETJEMAN has recently noted in another place the deterioration of such conventional politenesses as "Excuse me" and "Pardon," which have simply become ritual formulæ pronounced before an act of discourtesy. He would be interested in the sign in a window near Fleet Street: POLITE NOTICE. NO PARKING.



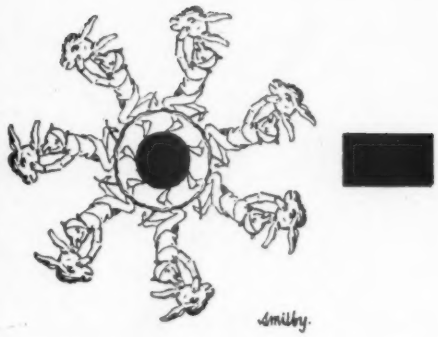
GENERAL QUIXOTE



In the Sixties
J. B. MORTON
says:

Seven Ages of Humour

I TOLD YOU SO



WE who are in our sixties to-day belong to that race which the young find so difficult to understand; the strange race which lived before the religion of Progress, with its materialistic creed and its dogma of the approaching perfection of man, had translated dreams into reality. The triumphs of physical science were ahead of us. There were no aeroplanes to abolish frontiers, to enable travellers to enjoy a bird's-eye view of a dozen countries in the time it took us to explore one small town, and to shorten wars by the wholesale slaughter of civilians. We had no motor-cars to carry us safely and swiftly about the streets. The telephone, with its friendly bell heralding pleasant conversation at any hour of the day or night, had not arrived. No films showed us the American way of life. Lacking radio and television, which were soon to lay on culture and entertainment like gas and water, we had to make our own amusements, or to undertake a journey to a concert, a theatre, a music-hall or a circus. The cook had not been replaced by the chemist, and was not only ignorant of the proper jargon in which to describe the ingredients of a meal, but had no means of freezing the taste and the deleterious juices out of meat. We had our experiments in the arts but, when we look back, they seem timorous beside the bolder experiments of to-day. No artist had thought of painting a picture which could be looked at either way up, according to the mood of the art-lover, nor of shooting mud out of a gun and smearing it with the feet into shapes of a new beauty. No sculptor had attempted to depict a man as an arrangement of wires, brass nails and lumps of stone with holes in them. Music was not a gloomy noise, and even the *calligrammes* of Apollinaire made sense. The more daring protest against tradition, with grammar, syntax, punctuation and capital letters ignored, was to come from later poets. Our architecture, in the words of an architect, was "dull and unadventurous, until concrete provided the inspiration for what we see around us to-day." Finally, our wars were affairs of soldiers and sailors, as the scientists had not yet invented a method by which the humblest woman or child is permitted to share the perils of the battlefield.

I have survived to see the disappointment of those who believed that everything, by a natural law, was bound to get better and better. That grotesque idea is already abandoned, but there was so much enthusiasm for it that it is not surprising that it has been succeeded by a perplexed despair. If I say that people in general were happier when I was a boy I am not, as younger men tell me I am, indulging in sentimentality. Nor is it any answer to say that I am biased. Of course I am biased. In other words I know my own mind, having experienced the two worlds and made my choice. Persons of my age are used to being told, by those who never saw the times they speak of, that their picture is false; that they lived in a dreary, constricted, uneventful, unhealthy period. "The whole trouble," I have been told recently, "is that you are out of touch with to-day." There are times when I should be grateful to anyone who could tell me how to be out of touch with to-day. I would like, for instance, to be out of touch with the incessant noise and fuss. Silence, which encourages thought, and is therefore feared, has become almost unprocurable. You may, by walking across country, escape the din of the roads, but there is still the racket in the skies. I am aware that the desire for moments of quiet has become a mark of eccentricity, but I gather from the repeated and unavailing complaints of people who live near airfields that even that perpetual feast of noise is beginning to lose its attraction. I would also like—and here I am no querulous misfit—to be out of touch with the machinery which confiscates so much of the money I earn, while howling at me to save more. The trouble with me is that I am far too much in touch with the present state of affairs, which is one of the reasons for my preference for other days.

Reasonable people will always grant that there was more security in my boyhood, but they will often add that, though we may have been happier, we are far healthier to-day, and our expectation of life has been increased enormously. This seems an odd moment to talk about increased expectation of life, and one can hardly ignore the modern increase in hypochondria. A survey of the innumerable articles about health, and the ubiquitous advertisements for pills and patent medicines, does not suggest a healthy community. On the contrary, it seems that anyone who is not ill already is about to be ill. We are terrorized by pictures of people who seem to be half-dead from some mysterious malady, but are obviously only tired, bored with their work, and anxious about the future. There are tranquillizing pills to counteract the effect of energizing pills, and energizing pills to counteract the effect of tranquillizing pills. There are ghoulish anatomical diagrams, charts, and menus from the laboratory to cure new diseases with bastard Græco-Latin names. Those who weigh too much are

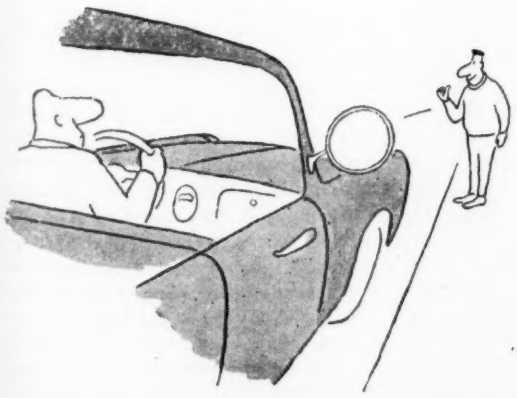
ready to endure torture at the word of an "expert" in order to become so thin and weak that it requires another "expert" to tell them how to put on weight again. All this I take to be an indication of unhealthy minds in unhealthy bodies. A sickly child of poor parents has a far better chance to-day of growing up to be a healthy adult, but if that healthy adult does not soon imagine that he is in need of medicine it is no fault of the mental climate in which he is compelled to live. The theory that we are all ill without knowing it is generally accepted. I recall the days when you sent for a doctor if you felt unwell, instead of buying tablets in case you might begin to feel unwell. I cannot admit that my contemporaries in youth were handicapped by not treating a meal as a chemical formula, or by being thankful for good health instead of wondering which of seven thousand two hundred and forty-one illnesses was in the offing.

When I was young the popular songs of the day, particularly the music-hall songs, expressed a robust and merry attitude towards life. In those songs were found the strong irony of the poor, and their gaiety. If there was self-pity it was accompanied by a wink and a kind of secret laughter as though the unfortunate saw the joke against themselves and were more amused than resentful. There were far fewer people who thought that the world owed them a living. I shall be told that we have had since those days two terrible wars and the slow decay of our civilization. But I am not blaming people for not being as happy as they were, I am simply saying they are not as happy as they were, and with good reason. The repetitive laments which are the popular music of our time express a self-pity which is not at all surprising, though I think that the insistence on the undiluted misery of falling in love is overdone. We of course had our silly drawing-room ballads, and the charge most frequently made against them is not that they were unmelodious but that they were sentimental—that word which infuriates the "tough" adolescents of to-day who will wait for hours in the rain to touch the tyre of a singer's motor-car. It is interesting to notice that if one of the lilting songs of Leslie Stuart is played anywhere the middle-aged whistle it and sing it with the enjoyment of half-starved men and women who have been offered a full meal. And those songs, which live on, had none of the machinery of modern publicity to lodge them in people's minds.

No man over sixty who dislikes the present age can have much hope of seeing a return to a saner world, but I am grateful for having been born in time to grow up in the last days before the Flood, as it were, and to enjoy a less harassed, quieter way of life. I sometimes play with the idea of a complete drying-up of the oil-wells of the world, and a subsequent oil-famine leading to a general slowing down of life. Apart from the obvious benefits to us all, except the oil magnates, politicians would not be able to cross the world in twenty-four hours, and would have leisure to think about what to say and do at an international gathering. I see no evidence that the speed and comparative ease of travel have broadened our minds, or, as was supposed to happen when the great distances shrank, have made the nations understand each other better and like each other more. Nor do I imagine that the most sanguine will claim that compulsory education is educating anybody, or that taste and manners and morals are improving. Are those who were told to believe that man is sufficient to himself, and that physical science held the key to a golden age, still sure that this ludicrous theory works when it is put into practice? For my peace of mind, in whatever years may remain to me, I propose to regard the present time as an overlong interlude of perplexity. Meanwhile, in spite of the great shadow which overhangs us all, there is very much to laugh at, and laughter preserves the sense of proportion. One day sanity will return, and if any youngster who happens to read what I have written has the good fortune to witness the recovery, I say to him now: I told you so.

Other contributors to this series, each representing a different decade, will be:

V. S. NAIPAUL
STEPHEN POTTER
PAUL JENNINGS
P. G. WODEHOUSE
S. L. BENSUSAN





You Should have Seen the Mess

By MURIEL SPARK

I AM now more than glad that I did not pass into the Grammar School five years ago, although it was a disappointment at the time. I was always good at English but not so good at the other subjects.

I am glad that I went to the Secondary Modern School, because it was only constructed the year before. Therefore, it was much more hygienic than the Grammar School. The Secondary Modern was light and airy, and the walls were painted with a bright, washable, gloss. One day I was sent over to the Grammar School with a note for one of the teachers, and you should have seen the mess! The corridors were dusty, and I saw dust on all the window ledges, which were chipped. I saw into one of the classrooms. It was very untidy in there.

I am also glad that I did not go to the Grammar School because of what it does to one's habits. This may appear to be a strange remark at first sight. It is a good thing to have an education behind you, and I do not believe in ignorance, but I have had certain experiences with educated people since going out into the world.

I am seventeen years of age, and left school two years ago last month. I had my A certificate for typing, so got my first job, as a junior, in a solicitor's office, and I was to start on the Monday, so along I went. They took me to the general office, where there were two senior shorthand-typists and a clerk, Mr. Gresham, who was far from smart in appearance. You should have seen the mess! There was no floor-covering whatsoever, and so dusty everywhere. There were shelves all round the room, with old box files on them. They were falling to pieces and all the old papers inside them were crumpled. The worst shock of all was the teacups. It was my duty to make tea—mornings and afternoons. Miss Bewlay showed me where everything was kept. It was kept in an old orange-box, and the cups were all cracked. There were not enough saucers to go round, etc. I will not go into the facilities, but they were also far from hygienic. After three days I told Mum and she was upset, most of all about the cracked cups. We never keep a cracked cup, but throw it out, because those cracks can harbour germs. So Mum gave me my own cup to take to the office.

Then at the end of the week, when I got my salary, Mr. Heygate said "Well, Lorna, what are you going to do with your first pay?" I did not like him saying this and I nearly passed a comment, but I said "I don't know." He said "What do you do in the evenings, Lorna? Do you watch Telly?" I did take this as an insult because we call it TV, and his remark made me out to be uneducated. So I did not go back to that job. Also, the desks in the general office were rickety. Dad was indignant because Mr. Heygate's concern was flourishing, and he had letters after his name.

Everyone admires our flat because Mum keeps it spotless and Dad keeps doing things to it. He has done it up all over and got permission from the Council to remodernize the kitchen. I well recall the Health Visitor remarking to Mum "You could eat off your floor, Mrs. Merrifield." It is true that you could eat your lunch off Mum's floors, and any hour of the day or night you will find every corner spick and span.

Next, I was sent by the agency to a publisher's for an interview, because of being good at English. One look was enough! My next interview was a success, and I am still at Low's Chemical Co. It is a modern block, with a quarter of an hour rest period, morning and afternoon. Mr. Marwood is very smart





"Mr. Frinton! Whatever are you trying to say?"

in appearance. He is well spoken, although he has not got a university education behind him. There is special lighting over the desks, and the typewriters are latest models.

But I have met other people, of an educated type, in the past year, and it has opened my eyes. It so happened that I had to go to the doctor's house to fetch a prescription for my young brother Trevor when the epidemic was on. I rang the bell, and Mrs. Darby came to the door. She was small, with fair hair, but too long, and a green maternity dress. But she was very nice to me. I had to wait in their living room, and you should have seen the state it was in! There were broken toys on the carpet, and the ash trays were full up. There were contemporary pictures on the walls, but the furniture was not contemporary but old-fashioned, with covers which were past standing up to another wash, I should say. To cut a long story short, Dr. Darby and Mrs. Darby have always been very kind to me, and they meant everything for the best. Dr. Darby is also short and fair, and they have three children—a girl and a boy, and now a baby boy.

When I went that day for the prescription Dr. Darby said to me "You look pale, Lorna. It's the London atmosphere. Come on a picnic with us, in the car, on Saturday." After that I got in with the Darbys more and more. I liked them, but I did not like the mess, and it was a surprise. The children's clothes were very shabby for a doctor, and she changed them out of their school clothes when they came home from school, into those worn-out garments. Mum always kept us spotless to go out to play, and I do not like to say it, but those Darby children frequently looked like the Leary family which the Council evicted from our block as they were far from house-proud.

They had an idea to make a match for me with a chemist's assistant, but he was not accustomed to those little extras that I was. There were plenty of boys at the office, but I will say this for the Darbys, they had lots of friends coming and going, and they had interesting conversation, although sometimes it gave me a surprise, and I did not know where to look. But it made a comparison with the boys at the office, less educated in their conversation.

Mavis did not go away to have her baby, but would have it at home in their double bed, as they did not have twin beds, although he was a doctor. A girl I knew in our block was engaged but was let down, and even she had her baby in the labour ward. I was sure the bedroom was not hygienic for having a baby but I did not mention it.

One day, after the baby boy came along, they took me in the car to the country to see Jim's mother. (I called him Jim by then.) The baby was put in a folding cot at the back of the car. He began to cry and, without a word of a lie, Jim said to him over his shoulder "Oh shut your gob, you little brute." I did not know what to do and Mavis was smoking a cigarette. Dad would not dream of saying such a thing to Trevor or I. When we arrived at Jim's mother's place Jim said "It's a fourteenth-century cottage, Lorna." I could well believe it. It was very cracked and old, and it made one wonder how Jim could let his old mother live in this tumble-down cottage as he was so good to everyone else. I said to the old Mrs. Darby, "Are you going to be re-housed?" but she did not understand this, and I explained how you have to apply to the Council and keep at them. But it was funny that the Council had not done something already when they go round condemning. Then old Mrs. Darby said "My dear, I shall be re-housed in the grave." I did not know where to look. The facilities were outside, through the garden.







One Saturday afternoon they took me to the films. It was the Curzon, and afterwards we went to a flat in Curzon Street. It was a clean block, I will say that, and there were good carpets at the entrance. The couple had contemporary furniture, and they also spoke about music, but there was no Welfare Centre to the flats, where tenants could go for social intercourse, advice and guidance. But they were well-spoken and I met Willy Morley who was an artist. Willy sat beside me and we had a drink. He was young, dark, with a dark shirt, so one could not see right away if he was clean. Soon after this Jim said to me "Willy wants to paint you, Lorna. But you'd better ask your Mum." Mum said it was all right if he was a friend of the Darbys.

I can honestly say that Willy's place was the most unhygienic place I have seen in my life. He said I had an unusual type of beauty which he must capture. This was when we came back to his place from the restaurant. The light was very low voltage, but I could see the bed was not made, and the sheets were far from clean. He said he must paint me, but I told Mavis I did not like to go back there. "Don't you like Willy?" she asked. I could not deny that I liked Willy, in a way. There was something about him, I will say that. Mavis said "I hope he hasn't been making a pass at you, Lorna." I said he had not done so, because he did not attempt to go to the full extent. It was always unhygienic when I went to Willy's place and I told him so once, but he said "Lorna, you are a joy." He had a nice way, I will say that. He took me out in his car, which was a good one, but dirty inside, like his place. Jim said one day, "He has pots of money, Lorna," and Mavis said "You might make a man of him, as he is keen on you." They always said Willy came from a good family.



But he would not change his shirt very often or get clothes, but he went round like a tramp, lending people money, as I have seen with my own eyes. His place was always in a state with the empty bottles and laundry in the corner. He gave me several gifts over the period, which I took, as he would have only given it away, but I will say this, he never tried to go to the full extent. He never painted my portrait, as he was painting fruit on a table all that time, and they said his pictures were marvellous, and thought Willy and I were getting married.

One night when I went home I was upset as usual after Willy's place. Mum and Dad had gone to bed and I looked round our kitchen which is done in primrose and white. Then I went into the living room, where Dad has done one wall in a patterned paper, deep rose and white, and the other walls pale rose, with white woodwork. The suite is new, and Mum keeps everything beautiful. So it came to me, all of a sudden, what a fool I was going with Willy. I agree to equality, but as to me marrying Willy, as I said to Mavis, when I recall his place and the good carpet gone greasy, not to mention the paint oozing out of the tubes, I think it would break my heart to sink so low.



Soft-sell Abroad

By STANLEY PRICE

A SHORT while ago I played the part of a disembodied voice on a television commercial. I won't name the product, as it has enough trouble selling anyway. Maybe it is the recession here, or just that the commercials aren't good enough. In view of my initial clash with Madison Avenue it seemed particularly odd that a disembodied English voice should have been in demand anyway.

Madison Avenue is notoriously not a respecter of the English. When I first came to New York I had several skirmishes along the Avenue when I tried to get a job with an advertising agency. My reception was remarkably cool. My samples, including some slogans that had pulverized London Passenger Transport Board passengers, were dismissed as quaint. One creative director rasped "Good soft-sell, but you have to hit our market harder than that in its bread-pan." I misheard his last phrase and smiled brightly. This only added to the view he had of my frivolous nature and hastened my exit. Another interviewer even finished off some equally patronizing remarks with "my boy." He was an Englishman who had arrived eleven years before. He said he had been fleeing from Socialism, and was now enjoying the best of both worlds. He was wearing a monogrammed tie and handkerchief and a Brooks Brothers suit.

Between interviews I cooled my head in the tea-lounge of the English-Speaking Union, and wondered if all this linguistic hands-across-the-sea was not just a lot of nonsense whereby British P.M.s covered up for their American grandmothers. Eventually I lost interest in trying to pretend my soft-sell was hard-sell; I stopped taking tea, and I left advertising behind me.

I would probably never have set foot in an advertising agency again if it hadn't been for Hank. Hank was an American friend who was a junior executive in a Madison Avenue agency. He looked after the advertising interests of a product I shall call "Blooblurge." "Blooblurge" was the sort of product that might have used a Traditional British Type on its advertising, but had decided instead to use the equivalent voice on its commercials. Hank was enraptured. "Man, I want to sell you on this idea. It's the best. You could make yourself a wad, and fast." He went on to specify how much a wad was, and how simple and fast it would all be. Beardless and without that fruity English voice that sounds as though it comes out of the tombs in Canterbury Cathedral, I scarcely felt I was the man for the job.

Hank was adamant. "Don't be a chicken. You're the only Limey I know, and if I can pull you out of my hat the Blooblurge crowd will love me." In the face of the recession Hank had to build himself a nest-egg of prestige, and if this only required him to pull a Limey out of his hat I couldn't let him down.

A few weeks later I reported to a conference room in Hank's Agency. It was after lunch, and the people in the conference room had that post-prandial Martini-weary look they were supposed to have at that hour of the day on Madison Avenue. The room was a plush jungle of angular lamps and Swedish furnishings. The colour scheme and the prints on the walls were fairly tasteful, however, and there were several chairs it looked almost impossible not to go to sleep in. On a big table in the centre of the room was an elaborate tape-recording apparatus and a maze of wires. Hank took me into a corner and started telling me who everybody was. Two of his directors were there and three of the Blooblurge crowd had showed up. Hank pushed a script at me with an exhortation to "pull all the stops out." (He need not have worried because the punctuation in the script was none too grand anyway.) The script was easy enough to follow and was headed "Audio." My Latin was still good enough to make me wonder what the "Video" would be all about. I began to get moral scruples. Say my voice was used as a background to some grotesque cartoon of which I thoroughly disapproved? My morality wilted as I was asked to step up to the microphone.

"It's the bright tin, the right tin, the tin that looks good in any home. Buy it, try it, it tastes good in any home," was the upshot of the message. I enunciated very carefully with mannered sang-froid and led up to the last phrase. "Yes, it's Blooblurge," I declaimed. In that final declamation I tried to mix together the tombs at Canterbury and the B.B.C. at Lord's. I had certainly never spoken that way in my life before. I doubted if I would ever dare do it again.

The minute I had finished heads went together conspiratorially all over the room. I heard someone say "interesting interpretation." Then Hank's superior looked at me and said "Could we have the Yes it's Blooblurge bit again." He sounded a lot less silly saying it than I did. I cleared several large rocks out of my throat, and Hank hissed in my ear "Give it zip, more zip, zip it." He sounded a little hysterical. I thought of Wales scoring between the posts at Cardiff Arms Park, lashed myself into a mental frenzy and spat out "Yes, it's Blooblurge." The Canterbury tombs were all gone. It sounded Welsh, like a crazed Emlyn Williams imitating a drunk Dylan Thomas. It wasn't at all what they wanted. Hank looked unhappy. The heads came together again angrily. A Blooblurge man came out of the huddle. "We want more impact and punch in it than that," he shouted. "You bet," echoed one of his minions. "More punch," a director hurled at me, and motioned me back to the microphone. This time I had nothing in my mind. I forgot that I was English. I glared at my tormentors and screamed "Yes, it's Blooblurge." Their faces beamed with smiles and there was a chorus of "Yep, that's it." Their heads went together again, and they seemed anxious to forget me.

Hank dragged me off to a corner to make further arrangements. He was sweating but happy. He left me to myself for a few minutes and I could hear the agency directors and the Blooblurge group planning their next manœuvre on the American public. A Blooblurge minion said "Well now we've got that off the ground let's hope it stays up there." A director riposted with "At least we know which way the wind is blowing, so we should be able to nail it down." The Senior Blooblurgian was still chary. "We've got to first base, but don't forget we still need a homer."

I have never been inside a Madison Avenue agency since, and I gather the commercial was never used. I don't have television so I don't know what now proclaims the particular joys of Blooblurge, but sometimes when I am cleaning my teeth I put on my phoniest American drawl and intone to the mirror "Man, this sure is Blooblurge. Yep, sure is." Maybe if I had said it that way it would have survived a second hearing and I would be a star to-day. That soft-sell always lets me down.



"I understand it picks up a bit after the fifth veil."

Who Gave You That Name?

By D. F. KARAKA

MAKAN, my bearer, is nearly fifty now. As with most Indian servants his age is difficult to determine with any element of certainty. In the days of the British *Raj* in which he was born, the villages of India were completely neglected. As the Indians had no vote in those days the British did not insist on an accurate census. Births and deaths were not systematically recorded except in the big cities, and the only available statistics of population were based on quick aerial surveys which could hardly be regarded as accurate.

So Makan may or may not have been counted. Being of the sleepy variety of Indian, it takes more than the hum of an aeroplane to push him out of bed, as my worn-out front door bell can testify.

Age, however, is of no great consequence to Makan. As he explained: "All is happening so long ago, I am not properly remembering." In the village, he explained, there are three ages: childhood is "up to six"; marriageable age used to be between 6 and 16 (both inclusive); and old age sets in some time after marriage.

I asked Makan how long ago it was that he got married. After some quick calculations he replied: "Five childrens ago."

His five children are: Mani, a young woman of "twenty-five must be"; Shanti, another girl "about two years less"; Ratilal who gives his age as "22 must be"; Bhani a girl of 18/19 and finally Natwarlal or "junior," whose age is "11 to 12 almost about."

Natwarlal has to go to school because of a new State regulation which the Patel family regard as irksome.

It was the name of the youngest, Natwarlal, that made me ask Makan who gave him such a florid name.

"Pandit is giving," he said. A pandit is a learned man, "learned in astrology and such things" as Makan explained. "Too much study."

"Are all names given by the pandit?" I asked.

Makan replied: "Without calling pandit*ji* no one is calling child names." The "*ji*" suffixed to the pandit was to show more reverence.

"And how does panditji give a name to a child?"

"After looking in book," Makan explained.

It was quite a science, it would appear. On the eleventh day after birth the pandit is sent for. He arrives at an auspicious time in the morning. "Before lunch," Makan emphasized. The parents then tell the pandit of the time and day of the child's birth and its sex. On this data the pandit looks up the names auspicious to that particular planetary setting and from among these, using his own intuition, he chooses one. So came into being Natwarlal.

"And do you have to give the pandit anything for his trouble?" I asked, intrigued by the intricate procedure.

"Lunch and two-eight."

"Two-eight" stands for two rupees and eight annas, equivalent to 3*s.* 11*d.*

"Would you have got a better name if you had paid more?"

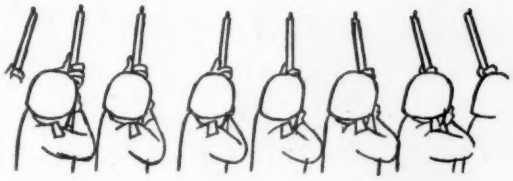
Makan was doubtful whether the star position could have been materially altered by stepping up the pandit's fee. But he did agree that for a few more annas the pandit might have found an even more auspicious name.

"But at that time not affording more money," he explained. "All in kismet's hands. But peoples are saying now all is equal, so why not for Natwarlal is becoming Prime Minister when name almost same to same as Jawaharlal?"

Under the Constitution of India such a possibility cannot be ruled out. But Makan pointed out that in order to become Prime Minister of India "junior" would first have to join the Congress Party. "But that is costing not much. Only four annas."

Rs 2/8 to get an auspicious name at birth and thereafter, only four annas more to pave the way to Prime Ministership! But Makan assures me that is the tariff prevailing in his village.





South from London Bridge

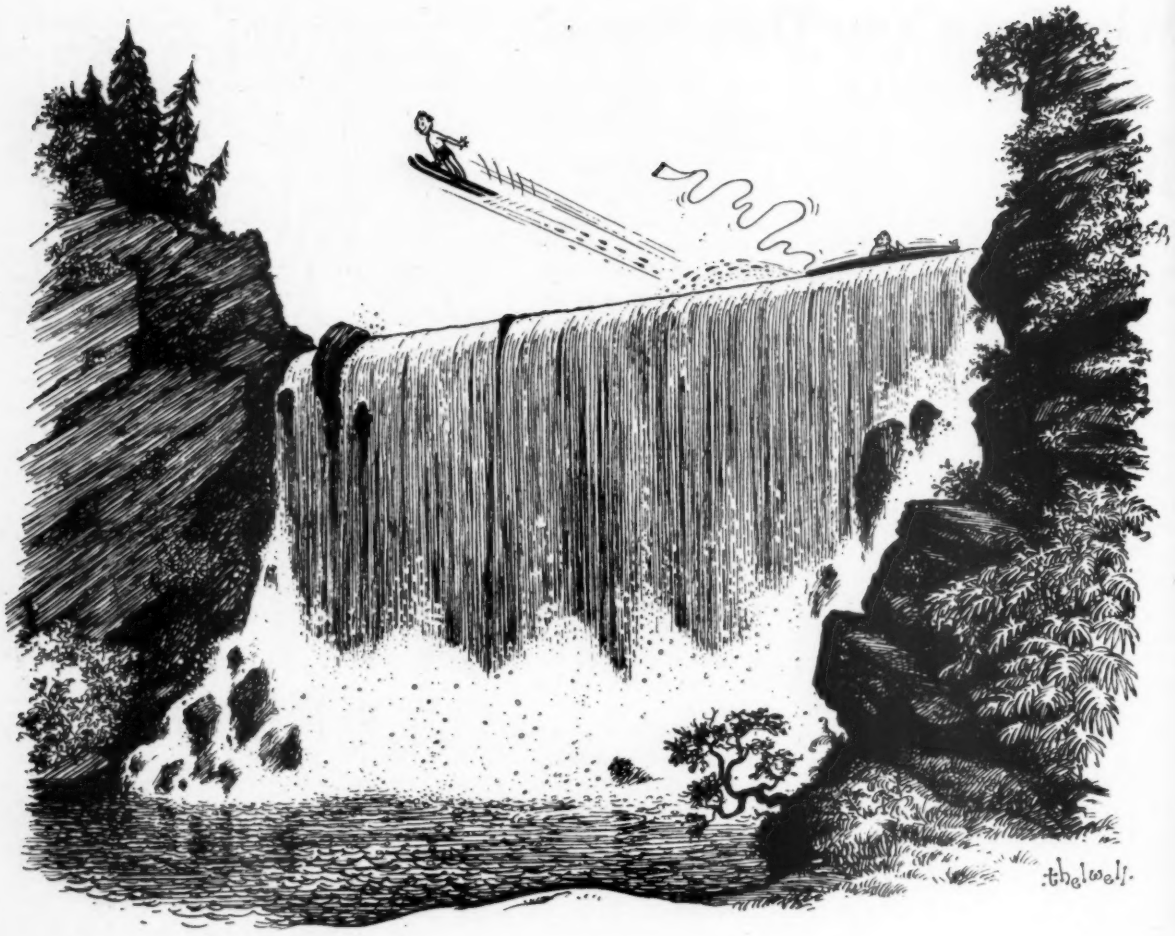
I SOMETIMES wonder, as I go
Southward in my suburban train,
If Earth has aught more fair to show
Than Norwood Junction in the rain.

Think not, however, that I sing
Only of Norwood; I do not:
Penge is a many-splendoured thing,
And Sydenham a lovesome spot;

And what of Clock House, from whose strokes
The Beckenham burghers take their time?
And Forest Hill's aspiring oaks?
And Waddon Marsh of humid clime?

Nay, dash it! Turn where'er you will,
Euphonious conurbations trend
From Hither Green to Gipsy Hill,
From Hayes to Elmer's tragic End.

G. D. R. DAVIES



The Laws of Parkinson

By A. H. BARTON

AT the far end of the long table the chairman was talking inaudibly. Strapfarthing grunted and turned to Purbright. "I have been reading a book called *Parkinson's Law*,"* he said. "A book of essays in the analysis of administration."

"I read his original article," said Purbright. "Parkinson there showed conclusively that work expands so as to fill the time available, and that administrative staffs must increase at a rate of over five per cent per annum, irrespective of any variation in the amount of work (if any) to be done."

"That 'if any' is an example of what I like about Parkinson," said Strapfarthing. "Precision of statement flows from clarity of thought. In his book Parkinson does again propound that first Law. But he deals also with other matters, fundamental to administration. Parkinson's Procedure for identifying the important people at a cocktail party, whether diplomatic or expense-account, is illuminating. He harnesses space and time for the purpose: the man in the centre of the group in Square E/7 of a rectangular room, between H + 75 and H + 90 minutes, is the man to kiss the feet of while offering the martini to."

"Interesting," Purbright said. "I must see one day whether I can get into E/7 at the right time."

Strapfarthing looked at him. "You might be able to edge your way in," he said, "but I think that the raw tension of an E/7, and indeed the actual physical danger, would be very much too much for the likes of you. Parkinson," he continued, "deals with finance also; he demonstrates that the time spent by a committee upon an item of the agenda is in direct inverse proportion to the amount of money involved. The decision to buy an atomic reactor for ten million pounds takes 2½ minutes to reach; the estimate for providing a bicycle shed will be discussed, perhaps bitterly, for forty-five minutes. With his inquiring mathematical mind he then draws for us, in lucid British prose, a graph; and we find ourselves wondering whether an item for a farthing would keep the committee in session for eternity, and wondering also whether it

* *Parkinson's Law*, by C. Northcote Parkinson. Illustrated by Osbert Lancaster. John Murray, 12/6

would be possible to measure the short period, so very short, that the committee would give to an item costing twenty billion pounds. But he does not leave us in the air: he propounds a theory, Parkinson's theory of the points of vanishing interest . . ."

Purbright prompted him. "Points of vanishing interest?" he asked.

Strapfarthing looked stern. "This is a book that you should read," he said. "I intend that you should buy a copy when we get out of here."

There was a short pause in which Purbright could hear the murmur of voices from the end of the table. Strapfarthing went on:

"The saddest of his essays deals with the decay which descends upon any organization to the chief position of which a mediocre man——" here Strapfarthing stared coldly into Purbright's eyes "—a mediocre man is appointed. Such a man prefers subordinates as mediocre as himself, or more so, and sees that he gets them; this he does by use of the word 'sound': 'I prefer a man who is sound,' he says, 'to a man who is clever,' and he gives himself his sound men. These sound subordinates proceed to obtain for themselves even sounder assistants, and the whole organization is soon infected by a lavish decay; a decay which is unnoticed by those in the organization but which, for the visitor on the threshold, has all the impact of a sudden explosion in a kipper works."

Purbright glanced towards the head of the table. Up there the discussion was active and forthright; progress was evidently being made.

Strapfarthing began to speak again. "Parkinson," he said, "seems to me to leave only one phenomenon of administration unanalysed: the man who decides not to be tied to his desk. This is the man who one Saturday buys shooting stick and field-glasses. On Monday morning, instead of entering his office, he spends the day walking about. He visits the drawing office where the blueprints of the lighthouses are produced; he walks the two miles to the great hangars from which pour the lighthouses themselves. He visits storerooms. He looks in on costing clerks. 'I like to get out and see things working,' he tells his colleagues in passing. 'I like to get to know my men and their problems. At first hand.' After two week's absence he returns to his office. Pushing aside the heaps of paper on his desk he writes a report. He tells his Board that the office work is piling up, and that he needs an able deputy, a man who can keep the office moving and leave him free to supervise. The Board approves and he spends the rest of his life in fresh air and idleness. He uses the field-glasses for birdwatching on the great expanse of disused airfield upon which his organization operates."

Purbright's attention had returned to the men at the other end of the table. He spoke to Strapfarthing. "Does Parkinson have anything to say about committee work in general?" he asked.

Strapfarthing's face lit up. "Indeed he does," he said. "He contends that committees grow, and that they have a life cycle. When a committee reaches a specific size it becomes too large to be effective. Within it there then forms a new smaller committee, which does the work. This committee naturally consists of the abler and more energetic members. The new committee may describe itself as the executive council of the old, or it may replace the old committee entirely. It does not matter which. What matters is that the passengers fall away."

"Have a look up the table," Purbright suggested.

Strapfarthing looked. The five men at the top of the table were energetically intent upon each other's words and upon the dispatch of business. With one exception the remainder were asleep. The exception, a thin man with pince-nez, was knitting.

"Do you remember the exact size at which a committee becomes too large to be effective?" Purbright asked.

"Twenty-one, I think," said Strapfarthing. He counted heads. "Twenty-three of us," he pronounced. He rose promptly to his feet. "I think we may go, Purbright," he said. "We have a bookshop we should visit."

❧ ❧

"Develop a Strong, Beautiful voice by silent exercises . . ."—*Daily Telegraph*

We could use more of this sort of thing.

CHESTNUT GROVE

Phil May contributed to PUNCH from 1893 until his death in 1903.



Club Attendant (*to stout party who is struggling into overcoat*). "ALLOW ME, SIR."

Stout Party. "NO, DON'T TROUBLE! THIS IS THE ONLY EXERCISE I EVER TAKE!"

February 13 1901

Herbert Hates Hyphens

By A. P. H.

THE author of a thousand books, I suppose, would still receive a childish thrill when the proofs of Number 1,001 arrived. It is like seeing things come up in the garden of which one had almost given up hope. All that wilderness of words, written so painfully so many months ago—how wonderful to see them at last in print! But after an hour or two of proof-reading he is a man racked by a hundred worries; and a few days later, when he returns the proofs to the publishers, he is sick of the sight of his masterpiece.

The few ordinary "literals" are bad enough. He knows that he may read the wretched book twenty times and still pass over "supressed," or "Minnosota": and the publisher's readers can miss things too. But far more worrying are the Problems of Consistency, and those accursed hyphens provide the worst.

Your fair page 33, you find, has been disfigured by the vigilant "reader" with a large circle in ink. The circle encloses the word "life-buoy" and the "reader" has written "Query one word, see pages 91 and 163." On page 91 you find "lifebuoy," one word, and on page 163 "life buoy," two words. You also find everywhere, for this is a nautical work, lifelines, life-lines and life lines. (Which, by the way, would you say, are right? Go on, write 'em down.)

You look up your manuscript and find that the fault is yours. In the fine frenzy of composition you did not pause to bother about hyphens, though here and there are little marks which may be hyphens or merely nervous dots. Yes, yes, I know, before the book goes to the publisher you should go through it, make up your mind about lifebuoy (and a hundred similar problems) and establish consistency. But then you are exhausted, you are also in a hurry. Besides, you know jolly well that though you may decide what is right the publishers may not agree with you and may change all your lifebuoys to life-buoys.

I have three authorities in my home—the great *Oxford English Dictionary en masse* (thirteen volumes); *Odhams Dictionary*, a much more recent work; and Collins' *Authors' and Printers' Dictionary*, also from Oxford, and modestly described as "An Attempt to Codify the Best Typographical Practices of the Present Day"—also of course the great but petrifying Fowler.

Well, the *O.E.D.* has life-buoy and life-line; Odhams has lifebuoy and lifeline; Collins does not mention either, but gives lifeboat, one word, which seems a good guide. But then the *O.E.D.* gives life-boat. How is the wretched author to be sure that he is right? Personally I am all for Odhams. I hate the hyphen. It is an ugly thing, sometimes useful, sometimes essential, subject to certain rules, as you will discover if you have the time to plough through Fowler. But I am sure that lifebuoy does not need one and I can see no difference between lifebuoy and lifeline. But who am I to go against Oxford? So in a recent work I have feebly compromised—lifebuoy in one line and life-line (to please great Oxford) in the next. How ridiculous!

Collins has a dear little list: lifeboat, life-guard, lifelike, lifelong, life-size, lifetime. This may be in accord with "the best typographical practices," but it makes no sense to me.

The *O.E.D.* has "life-boat day" next to "lifeboat-man." Yes, yes, I know there are rules. But are they good ones?

Have we not far too many hyphens? All agree that "police court" is two words. But they also agree that "police-constable," "police-boat" and "police-car" have hyphens. Why?

Oxford and Odhams agree in giving



"It's all right—we are members."

Pole-Star a hyphen. Reed's Nautical Almanac does not: and surely Reed's is right. Why should rope-ladder be afflicted with a hyphen any more than silk stocking?

Then there are the horrid conundrums of capitals. Bishops and Archdeacons, according to Collins, are entitled to capitals—but rectors, no. This seems to me to be unjust and snobbish. Civil Servants, by the same authority, have two capitals. It is true that a "civil servant" might mean a polite butler or courteous cook. But how unlovely and unseemly those two capitals can be! Here is a passage from a book by Mr. Somerset Maugham:

> "The English middle class is never without the desire to rise in the social scale, and to have a writer in the family is to the clergyman, the solicitor, the Civil Servant something of a prestige item."

Apart from proper names, those are the only capitals on the page. How wrong they look! But they are *right*. Behold! "Civil Service, the state departments of administration, etc., as distinct from the armed forces." (Odhams)

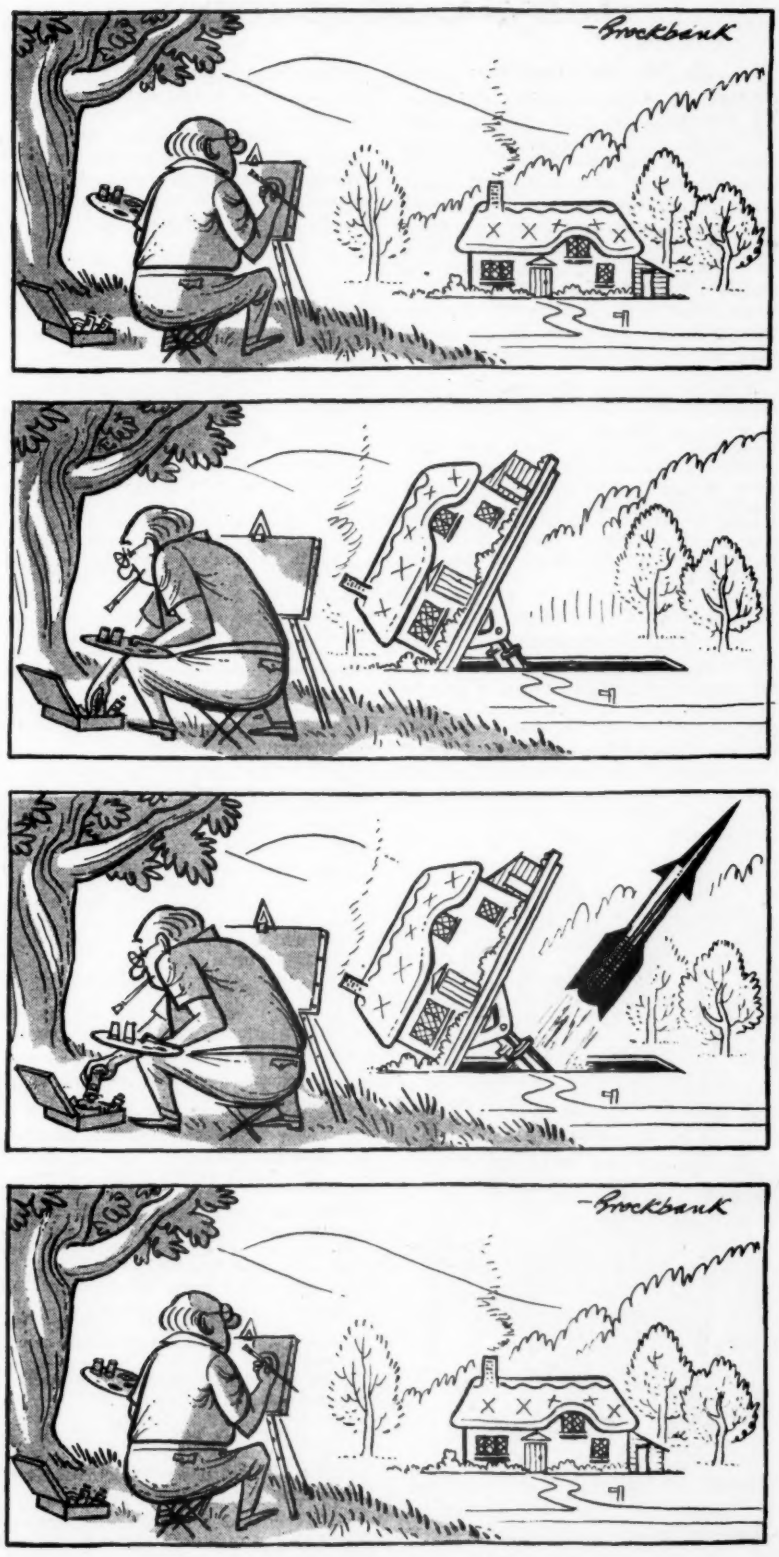
If Mr. Maugham had added to his list "the magistrate, the judge, the general" the printer would not, I think, have given them capitals. There must be something wrong.

I have an idea. Here perhaps is a new and splendid chance for the hyphen—"civil-servants." That would show that we were not thinking of mannerly housemaids without exalting a worthy body of men above their station. But *The Times*, I see, has gone over to "civil servant." Well done.

Let us declare war on hyphens. The hideous things are breeding and multiplying unduly. Can we not have a Royal Commission on the Hyphen? Or failing that, let the Home Secretary refer the Hyphen to the Royal Fine Art Commission. Let them go through the dictionaries condemning every hyphen that has not a valid and convincing excuse for its existence, declaring "one word" here and "two words" there.

Meanwhile, too, we feeble authors must make up our own minds, assert ourselves, and refuse to be bound by "the best typographical practices."

There will have to be a new edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but I can't help that.



Toby Competitions

No. 18—The Hard Way

THE job of English critics reviewing the Moscow Arts Theatre productions of Chekov's plays in Russian was rendered less difficult by their familiarity with the plays themselves. Competitors are asked to imagine that they have seen a Slitzovian play, hitherto unknown in England, performed by a Slitzovian cast, in the Slitzovian tongue, of which they have no knowledge. They are invited to write a review, favourable or otherwise, in not more than one hundred and fifty words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive Toby bookmarks. Entries (any number, but each on a separate piece of paper and accompanied by a separate entry token, cut out from the bottom left-hand corner of this page) by first post on Friday, June 6, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 18, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 15
(*First Person Singular*)

The task was to write an extract from the imaginary autobiography of one of the people who have persistently made the headlines during the past few years. President Nasser, Aneurin Bevan, Colonel Grivas, Lady Lewisham, Hugh Gaitskell and Diana Dors figured prominently in the list of entries; but the field was led all the way by Lady Docker. She seemed to have been most leniently treated by the handicapper, and romped home an easy winner at a very short price.

Some quaint and extraordinary sidelights on the lives of eminent persons emerged, although the general level of comment was inclined to be cautious.

The prize was awarded to:

LANIUS
OFFICERS' MESS
16 BATTALION, R.A.O.C.
BICESTER, OXON.

for the following entry:

> . . . and after all it *was* only a paper one. D. worked it out over dinner that for the cost of running the yacht we could have bought enough to bury the whole place four feet deep in them, and L. said it was a pity we hadn't. I mean, it wasn't as if the thing had been cloth of gold or anything like that, not that cloth of gold's a very nice sort of material anyway. I had a dress done in it once to match one of the cars, but it wasn't as successful as it ought to have been. It's awfully difficult to find anything that looks *really expensive enough* these days. The consul was ridiculously stuffy about the whole business. I simply can't see what we pay these people for when . . .

John Hookey, 3 South Parks Road, Oxford, offered a glimpse of President Eisenhower:

> . . . but for a slight interruption at the eleventh tee, when the walkie-talkie operator intervened with some triviality about a minor Middle-Eastern revolution, the game went well; and I shot a rather pleasing birdie at the seventeenth. The day ended happily at the Country Club; but a feeling hung over us all that these good days were passing, and that Washington, with all its pettiness, would soon force itself upon us . . .

The sort of anecdote which crops up in so many memoirs was evoked by W. M. Mathers, 12 Hunters Avenue, Barnsley, Yorks:

> A policeman got out, and pulling his notebook out of his pocket, walked towards my car.
>
> "Who do you think you are?" he asked. "Stirling Moss?"
>
> "As a matter of fact," I said, "I am."
>
> Then he obviously recognized me. Slowly his look of surprise changed to one of amusement until suddenly, with a broad grin on his face, he pushed his notebook back into his pocket.
>
> "Aren't you going to arrest me?" I asked.
>
> "No," he said, "I just couldn't. They call me Stone—and I guess I'll be rolling along."
>
> He roared with laughter as he walked back to his car.

An authentic note was struck by Mary Campden, 10 Aubrey Road, London, W.8, in her fragment from Jayne Mansfield's story:

> And now, I would like to state my humble gratitude to that great man, Jacob Epstein; my indebtedness to him is beyond price. His wonderful theory of Relativity did so much to straighten me out during a bumpy passage in my career; in fact, it explained to me the true meaning of all things, in simple human terms. If I can now call myself a co-ordinated entity, and above all, an actress, it is thanks to the Professor and his teachings. We never did manage a meeting; but I would guess him to be a sweet and integrated person. The sort of person, in fact, he's so helped me to become.



"It takes at least half a dozen sidecars to convince me that this attempt to revive the 'twenties isn't a ghastly flop."

TOBY 18



Vincent Firth, Hamilton Ward, Royal National Hospital, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, offered these words from the Archbishop of Canterbury:

> Among the critics who have been unwearying in their efforts for my betterment are those who have been good enough to point out that I might perhaps have remarked on matters of public interest with more effect if only I could have persuaded myself to have done so less frequently.
>
> While I could say in justification—or, as one's critics would doubtless prefer, in defence—that I have always seen in the office of the Primate a clear obligation, ecclesiastical as well as pastoral, to pronounce on all questions of public concern which seemed (or ought to have seemed) to call for a definite lead, I must confess I have never felt myself quite an equal match for the zeal of the popular press which has, on more than one occasion, displayed a readiness to quote me almost, so to speak, before the inverted commas were out of my mouth . . .

A Toby bookmark to all those mentioned above; and to the following: *Katharine Dowling, 22 Markham Street, London, S.W.3; Pierre Dubois, 82 Newlands Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne 2; John Heffer, 10 Barton Road, Cambridge; William K. Howard, 65 Victoria Road, Colchester; M. Hutchins, 34 Wilton Road, Salisbury, Wilts.; and Carl Roman, Thorne Lea, 9 Hillside Gardens, Barnet, Herts.*

"Four Americans and five Russians who met when the U.S. and Red armies linked up at the Elbe 13 years ago are having a reunion in Washington. The Americans are taking the Russians sightseeing and throwing them a dinner . . ."—*Daily Mail*

Sure that isn't an Un-American Activity?

Love Story

By MONICA FURLONG

TONY BRANT was twenty-five years old and very handsome, having curly black hair, blue eyes, strong white teeth, a tanned skin, and standing 6 feet 1 inch in his socks. He weighed twelve stone nine pounds, and took shirts with 16-inch collars.

Muriel was *petite* and charming, with a pink-and-white skin, tartan trousers, brown eyes like a wistful spaniel's, taffy-coloured hair (I'm getting some of this from a women's magazine. Good, isn't it?) and her shape was about 36 inches by 16 inches by 36 inches. (The silly girl would economize on her lunches.)

The scene, you notice, is skilfully set for romance, especially when I tell you that Tony was an architect full of a burning zeal to leave the world a better place than he found it and Muriel a dowdy stay-at-home librarian, just waiting for a beautiful experience to make her take off her horn-rimmed spectacles and turn into a ravishing *femme fatale*. (If her sight is as short as I suspect it is the event might be fatal in more senses than one. Better a dowdy brunette than a dead blonde, *I* say, but of course I am not romantic.)

The reason, I should tell you, why Tony was not already writhing on the rack of love was, partly because his conventionally unhappy childhood had made him shy of the female sex, and partly because he had been too busy studying lintels and ogees and flaunches and the stress behaviour of metals. Also he thought girls were soppy.

"What is the good of women?" he used to ask the other men in his architecture class. "It is well known that they run slower, tire quicker, are weaker, and age sooner than the male of the species. Also they cannot bowl overarm, have lighter brains, and are apt to grow hysterical in crises. I ask you, what edge have they got over men?"

"They live longer," said some wit, but Tony could not see that this was much reason, women being what they were.

Muriel was not in love either. She had a butterfly mentality, hated men and all that serious, exhausting business of coquetry and flirtations, and frittered her time away reading Dostoevsky and listening to *musique concrète*. What's more, she publicly declared that she meant to spend the rest of her life so doing and, whatever else she did, was certainly not going to get married. (But I'll get this couple together somehow, just see if I don't.)

Tony ran lightly up the steps of the library one sunny morning early in March. He came in regularly to read the weekly periodicals he was too mean to buy, and to-day he was particularly happy because it had just occurred to him that if he got married before the end of the tax year he would get enough money back to buy a new geometry set and perhaps even a subscription to an architectural journal. Muriel was crying quietly in the reference section because the head librarian had made her promise to come to the pictures with him that evening and it meant she would miss her evening class in metaphysics and would not have time for the next enthralling chapter of *Crime and Punishment*. (The love-plot thickens, you notice.)

Now it is very possible that Tony might never have looked twice at Muriel on that fateful Monday if she had not been clutching in her grief the very left-wing weekly he wanted to read. Unselfishness was not Tony's most striking *trait*, but it seemed to him that he would never read "This England" or the Personal Column at all unless he could prise the tear-stained journal from the girl's wretched grasp.

"My dear girl," he said, in vibrant tones, placing his strong, sunburned hand on her taffy-coloured head, "what is the matter?"

Muriel sobbed out her painful story, leaving no detail untold, and as she talked a strange, wild emotion, such as he had never felt before, beat in his breast. He began to see unexpected beauties in this strange girl, and especially on the third finger of her left hand. (The beauty of course was in what wasn't on the third finger of her left hand.)

He paced up and down for a few moments in front of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, toyed nervously with a volume of Crockford's, tossing it lightly from hand to hand, and finally settled down on one knee a couple of feet from Fowler. "Muriel," he said gallantly (you may well ask how he knew her name, but it would be kinder not to), "if you marry me you need never again go to the pictures with the head librarian. I should never dream of pestering you for your company in the evenings, or at any other time. My interest in you is not fired by fleshly considerations but is purely and wholesomely financial. Say yes, and you will make me very happy. What is more, as my fiancée it would be unthinkable for you not to attend your metaphysics class to-night."

I ask you, what girl could resist such a proposal?—and Muriel was no different from any other feather-headed young thing who reads Dostoevsky and listens to *musique concrète*. She accepted him. Oswald Schwarz might have had doubts as to their compatability, but young love goes its own way, and a fig for Professor Schwarz.

And so they got married (I always said they would) and, settling down in a snug little dreamhouse of Tony's design, lived happily ever after. Or anyhow until their divorce came through.



No Sweet, No Cheese

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

ON the very day that the Russians announced the successful launching of their newest and mightiest sputnik—Ascension Day, it was—I happened to be lunching with Comrade Shikolnikov, a member of the Ukrainian delegation from the plastic ball-bearings industry. (How I came to be involved in ball-bearings is a long story, and I will not weary you with it, but essential ingredients are the fulfilment of a boyhood dream and a free go at the smoked salmon and Chateaubriand.) Mr. Shikolnikov was one of those Russians who look taller sitting down than standing up, a fact which prompted my opening ice-breaking remark.

"You dance the gopak?" I said.

"Thank you, not now," he said. "For the gopak one needs more space than is immediately available."

"Is there a human being in your sputnik?" I asked.

"Niet, niet," he laughed. "In any case there would be no room for gopak."

I ladled horse-radish sauce on to his salmon and smiled acceptance of his thanks.

"You have heard about our new cricket ball, niet?" I said.

"Cricket ball? Ball-bearings?"

I explained that a distinguished British scientist had just completed his wind-tunnel experiments on a revolutionary kind of cricket ball—a hollow sphere weighing the regulation five and a half ounces, designed to assist bowlers at the expense of batsmen.

"It is the first serious attempt," I said, "to make one-day Tests feasible."

"Soviet Union favours complete abandonment of tests. Only Foster Dulles is adamant."

He forked a slice of his salmon to my plate and threw an arm round my shoulder in the friendliest manner possible.

"Old Russian custom," he said. "Is good. Eat."

"Tell me," I said, drinking deeply from the carafe of water, "what has most impressed you about Britain? Be perfectly frank: we are no longer offended by mild praise."

"I think I should have been most impressed by your London Airport," he said, "but we were made to alight at Sutton Scotney. Why was that so?"

"The noisè of your aircraft is not good for the inhabitants of London Airport. There is interference with television reception. Not good for Anglo-Soviet relations." Furious with myself for echoing my friend's stilted, pedantic English and guide-book pronunciation, I carved most of the fat from my steak and deposited it on his plate. "Is good," I said. "Scotch beef."

"My comrades say that we land at London Airport okay, but you *call* it Sutton Scotney because England ashamed of London Airport. Lies or not lies?"

The man's effrontery and the English vodka took my breath away.

"Good heavens, man," I said, "you don't really think, do you, that we'd stoop to such low cunning!"

"My comrades only; but it cannot be denied that a church resembling Westminster Abbey was visible from the airfield."

"Sutton Scotney parish church? Oh, this is impossible!"

"Also that on leaving the airport our bus passed the Claridge's Hotel."



"He's down for Eton. The Labour Party may have other plans."

"'The Grapes!' Why . . . oh, have some more vodka!"

We ate in silence for a time and I began to think I should never see the end of the fat on my plate.

"England mustard is good," said Mr. Shikolnikov, emptying the pot over my fat. "Good and hot.

"My opinion is not that of my comrades," he went on. "I am of the opinion that Macmillan government make us land at Sutton Scotney so Russian aircraft will not be seen by Londoners. Right? It is so big, so great. Right-o?"

"Wrong-o," I said. "Listen, comrade, we British have the best aircraft in the world—yours included—and we have . . ."

"But no sputnik?"

"No, we have no sputnik, but as I tried to explain, we do have a brand new cricket ball. All the weight's in the skin, the outer layer of the thing, and it's got a dense seam to assist finger-spin and trajectory, and the surface is pitted with small indentations to encourage swerve or swing. Get a load of that!"

Mr. Shikolnikov took a deep draught of my vodka, clinking glasses with his empty.

"Would it not be more advisable to devote research perhaps not into cricket ball, where you have no competition from Socialist Republics, but into football? Very soon our two countries meet in Sweden to decide supremacy of Russian or Western type democracy. The score will be Russia 6, England 0, or something adjacent."

"Want to bet?" I said.

"And such downfall is not good for Britain. Even American H-bombers overhead do not console for defeat of such value, eh?"

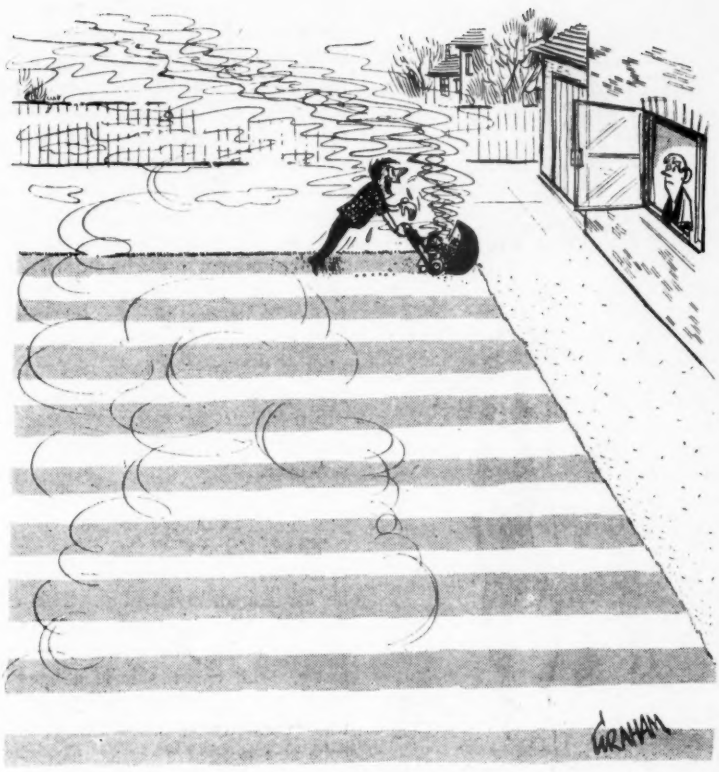
I didn't take the sweet.

"'One Moment Please'

the new diplomatic way to cover conversation pauses

'One Moment, Please' is an ingenious telephone attachment that tactfully covers those pauses in your phone conversations . . . just place your receiver on the attachment and soft music will play automatically. Your preference of Japanese or American melodies. Perfect for the person who has everything."—*American Advertisement*

Except, perhaps, Conversation.



"Best ever . . . thirty-seven minutes!"

Rail Economy Bid Probe

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

More money for the railwaymen will mean cutting down on costs elsewhere. What passenger amenities can best be spared?

IT may seem to the second-class passenger, wedged in the guard's van with a crate of chickens on his foot, that comfort and convenience have already absorbed all the economies they can take. An hour or two's thought, however—a breakdown in Balcombe Tunnel affords an ideal opportunity—will show him how wrong he is.

COMMUNICATIONS

Before the war people found their way about the national railway network without the aid of loud-speakers. They asked three porters, a naval officer and a small, sharp-nosed man with "Information" on his hat, took away the train they first thought of, and got there in the end. Are they any better off to-day, now that incidental music at Waterloo is interrupted by a voice saying "Waffengerl for Thaffle Thunksh, Lishlum, Shickener and Shlay Shlarsh, please thasherly P-pheeeeeeeeeeeeeee-sshhhhhhhh . . ."? They are not, even without the last bit, which is steam from the engine they had thought cold and dead. Until the British Railways loud-speaker system can be overhauled, with station by station tests to ensure a distinction between "Wallasey" and "Battersea," it might just as well be dismantled. Estimated saving, £819,000.*

* Admittedly a rough figure, this includes slashing reductions in staff speech-training, also proceeds of redundant equipment sold to B.B.C., I.T.A., Lord Hailsham, etc.



"Make up your mind."

NEWSPAPERS, OLD

No statistical breakdown is available to show man- and woman-hours devoted to collecting old newspapers from trains at termini. But according to "Facts and Figures About British Railways" there are now over twenty-three thousand passenger trains in daily service, and even allowing for habitual viewers and other near-illiterates this represents a heavy tonnage of discarded newsprint—more particularly on days when *The Times* produces a conveniently detachable sixteen-page supplement on "The Role of the Beetle in Light Industry." Legislation compelling the passenger to carry away his own reading matter, with penalties at ordinary communication-cord rates, would free large numbers of personnel for other duties, such as meeting in threes at glass-fronted vending-machines and exchanging ideas on how to give passengers even better all-round service.

UNIFORMS

These could be thinner. Present railway uniforms, built in slabs, are a fashion survival from olden times when clothing had to protect against flying cinders, suffragettes, banging against the walls of tunnels, and so on. It has been estimated that one standard issue driver's suit contains enough material to upholster half a first-class compartment. The design would be on the quiet side, but brightened by the buttons. An additional advantage of the thinner uniform would be more freedom of movement on the part of the staff. It would be possible, for instance, to raise the hand in a polite gesture to the peak of the cap—or to bend down and pick up passengers' dropped possessions, which under the present system are allowed to roll on to the track and get run over.

OUTSIDE PORTERS

The function of the outside porter is to step between a passenger and the cab he has hailed, and hail it. This costs the passenger sixpence; he accepts this philosophically, the porter matter-of-factly. But again, this is a hangover from the days when passengers were unacquainted with the routine of hailing cabs and needed a handy man-of-the-world to do it for them. This is no longer necessary, and outside porters should go. Estimated net saving, £48,000 to British Transport Commission Funds, and roughly the same amount in public sixpences.

CHALK

Some simpler method of denoting the destination of goods-wagons should be devised. Do they in fact need any? Thousands of passenger coaches reach their terminus daily without having "Bow Street (Card.)" or "Sampford Courtenay, fish only" scribbled all over their flanks. Goods guards, after light training courses, should be able to learn where their trucks are bound for, without having to keep getting out and reading them.

NEW STATIONS

Cut them down. The new station building at Gatwick is frequently confused by passing observers with the new airport it is designed to serve, except that it looks even bigger and less organized. When racegoers went in their thousands to Gatwick in the old days they got away all right from the old station; it would surely have been adequate to draw off an airliner's forty-four customers, forty-two of whom are being met by hired limousine. Estimated saving? Oh, say, £90,000,000.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY, ART WORK, ETC.

Much expenditure is involved in devising, executing, printing, distributing and collecting for pulping diagrams showing the percentage of pipe-fitted freight-carrying stock to total carrying stock 1938, 1948 and 1956.

The money saved could be devoted to graffito-resistant fittings for toilets, thus sparing passengers the tedium of the pencilled "They do?" after "Gentlemen lift the lid."

CONCLUSION

It is impossible to reach a conclusion in the space at our disposal. But what has been said demonstrates that a few million carved off here, another few million there, could soon put the railways back on the rails again without any real harm to passenger amenities. As an afterthought, they might slash the ticket-inspector strength. And what about slowing down the times of the crack expresses? It's the bar-business that pays these days: how much Scotch can the expenses-sheet executive get through in a mere 6 hours 40 minutes between Euston and Glasgow?

A. J. WENTWORTH, B.A. (Retd.)

After a lifetime of schoolmastering A. J. Wentworth (whose first collection of papers appeared in these pages some years ago) has retired with his presentation mahogany bureau to the village of Fenport in Hampshire. The first of a series of episodes in his life there, by H. F. Ellis, will appear in PUNCH next Wednesday.



BOOKING OFFICE

"Unable to Bear Arms"

Hitler's Youth. Franz Jetzinger. Translated from the German by Lawrence Wilson. *Hutchinson*, 16/-

FEW of the figures who have shaken the world can have been from a romantic angle so unattractive as Adolf Hitler. Against him even Lenin would lose points in personal competition for the place of least glamorous power-maniac of the century. Stalin, staggering about full of Caucasian wine and making Mr. Khrushchev dance the *gopák* for his amusement, loathsome as he was, gets into rather another and more grotesque category. The appalling squalidness of Hitler overrides everything. Dr. Franz Jetzinger, former Social Democratic deputy of the Provincial Assembly of Upper Austria and Librarian of the Provincial Archives of Linz, has just the right Teutonic thoroughness to investigate Hitler's origins. His book will be a joy to all who love details of early life.

The mystery of Hitler's heredity is of course the identity of his paternal grandfather. His grandmother, Maria Anna Schicklgruber (*b.* 1796) was daughter of a fairly well-to-do farmer. Frank, former Nazi Minister of Justice, in his book written while under sentence of death, says that Maria Anna became cook in Gratz to a Jewish family called Frankenberger, and had a child by the son of the house. The Frankenbergers are said by him to have paid the child's maintenance until the age of fourteen and corresponded with her for years.

Dr. Jetzinger is understandably anxious to give some credence to this story, although he admits that no direct proof exists; but one must agree with Mr. Alan Bullock in his foreword that the statement remains wholly unproved. The evidence of portraiture is obviously very thin to indicate the case either way, but the drawing here reproduced of Hitler, in profile, as a young man (together with other photographs) does not suggest the faintest Jewish physical characteristics: although the same cannot be said so emphatically of the photograph of his father, Alois Hitler.

Maria Anna Schicklgruber subsequently married Johann Georg Hiedler. (The name has many forms, probably deriving from the Czech "Hidlarček".) Dr. Jetzinger shows that Johann Georg Hiedler could not possibly have been the father of Maria Anna's child although the parish register was fiddled to indicate that.

Alois Hitler was a hard worker and rose to be Higher Collector of Customs at Passau in Bavaria, the Austrian Customs post maintained on German soil. The pay, for purposes of comparison, was more than that of the headmaster of the Elementary Continuation School. Alois Hitler, even apart from his three marriages, seems, unlike his son, to have taken a keen—sometimes too keen—interest in the opposite sex. On his death he received a sizable and complimentary obituary in the *Linz Tagespost*, the newspaper with the largest circulation in Upper Austria.

The point of all this is to show that Hitler's claim, made in *Mein Kampf*, that he was brought up in grinding poverty is perfect nonsense. He was a child of the third marriage. (His mother, Klara Pölzl, was a legitimate Hitler on the maternal side.) When the Chief Collector died his family lived on a pension only slightly less than his former pay.

Hitler tended to get bad reports at school except for drawing and gymnastics. There seems no reason to suppose that as a child he was in the least interested in history as he averred. He wanted to be an artist and applied to gain admission to the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. His horrible drawings were rightly considered inadequate, and he failed in the examination.

By getting an orphan's pension (in which he brought off a near-swindle on his sister), sponging on an aunt, doing an occasional odd job and getting an agent to sell his sketches in pubs, he managed to rub along. He did not smoke or drink and never took girls out. Dr. Jetzinger almost insists that he lived a pretty luxurious life. One cannot exactly go so far as to say that, but Hitler certainly contrived to do little or no work, and to go to the theatre most nights: no mean achievement.

When the time came to sign on for his military service Hitler took no action. The authorities were an astonishingly long time in catching up with him, eventually tracing him only after he had left Austria for Munich. Austrians could be extradited from Bavaria for evading conscription, but Hitler seems to have got round the Austrian consul, and when he came up before the Standing Military Commission in Salzburg on February 5, 1914, the finding was:

"Unfit for combatant and auxiliary duties, too weak. Unable to bear arms."

ANTHONY POWELL

NOVEL FACES



XVIII—EVELYN WAUGH

Scourging his age with wit, at times he seems
Like Pinfold haunted by demonic dreams.

They Fought Alone. Maurice Buckmaster. *Odhams*, 18/-

In this book something is always happening. The continuous action outlines courage undaunted by the knowledge of tortures in store for those unfortunate enough to be captured. Colonel Buckmaster, the head of the French section of the Special Operations Executive, operated from Baker Street. From there he organized the training of British citizens who spoke French like the natives, so that each individual agent could carry out sabotage. Apart from one confidence man (who did his training and was parachuted into France with a good supply of money never to be heard of again), the choice of men and women for these specialized duties was of a very high standard. Good exciting reading.

A. V.

Ambassador's Daughter. Meriel Buchanan. *Cassell*, 25/-

Miss Buchanan was lucky to see the final splendours of musical-comedy Europe from the front seats of the stalls, following her father *en poste* from Darmstadt in the 'nineties to Rome just after the First War. She recalls vividly her memories of court and embassy society, but the most interesting part of this autobiography is the section covering St. Petersburg from 1910–18 and ending with a remarkable account of life in an embassy under siege.

She refutes without difficulty the slanders on her father, Sir George Buchanan, of having started the revolution and done nothing to save the Imperial family. In fact without Foreign Office support he went out of his way to warn the Czar, and extracted from the British Government an offer of asylum which it subsequently withdrew. Her resentment at her father's lack of recognition and his treatment by Whitehall, and her own sadness over her frustrated love for a Russian Grand Duke, give the book a slightly bitter undercurrent.

E. O. D. K.

As Music and Splendour. Kate O'Brien. *Heinemann*, 16/-

It is heart-scalding to have to admit it but Miss O'Brien's latest novel is likely to give the reader the feeling of having looked at something for a very long time through the wrong end of the opera-glasses. The characters are perfectly seen but such an immense way off that their passions and delights never seem very affecting. Everything, too, moves at a uniform pace. Two young Irish girls, promising sopranos, are sent to Paris to study for grand opera: starting at the same convent each becomes a prima donna, each loses her close touch with her church, each finds unhappiness in love. The beauties and pleasant ways of life of various places, particularly Rome and Milan, the strange methods by which the training of young musicians may be financed, the language of the world of music, are all here and all interesting or charming; the girls, Rose and Clare, are both. The period, the eighteen-eighties, is distant enough to be romantic, but is not remote, and real people—Puccini, for instance—add convincing touches to the scene.

B. E. S.

Letters from Hilaire Belloc. Edited by Robert Speaight. *Hollis and Carter*, 30/-

This admirable selection of letters and parts of letters is designed to cover as many facets of Belloc as possible. In them he describes foreign journeys, tells funny stories, advises, commends, occasionally warns, talks about history and doctrine, plays with light verse and expresses a nature ceremoniously affectionate towards widows of Old Etonians. Though the monotony of cadence and the vagueness of generalization become a little tiring towards the end, the collection is far more varied than one man's letters usually are.

The picture of Belloc that emerges from the book is unattractive to the non-Catholic and, one imagines, often embarrassing to his co-religionists. Wine, The Faith, The Army, France, Revolution, and Jewish Bankers occur over and over again, but generally only as phrases. Some of his private letters read like old-fashioned leading articles. How much better Chesterton wears; for all his verbosity and superficial word-play and frequent silliness there was both imagination and human warmth about him.

R. G. G. P.

AT THE PLAY

The Three Sisters (SADLER'S WELLS)
The Birthday Party
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

IS it *Three Sisters* or *The Three Sisters*? Is it Tuzenbakh or Toozenbach; Solony or Solyony? (Opposite pages of the souvenir programme offer a choice between Semyonov-Pischik and Simeonov-Pistchin.) If it comes to that, is it the Moscow Art Theatre or the Moscow Arts Theatre? And does it matter in the slightest? No. But these are the niggling irrelevancies that revolve in a mind evading the larger question to be faced in the end: are the critics doing our own theatre justice by asserting on all sides that, compared with the Russians, it has never given us any Chekov, and seldom anything else?

I search my conscience painfully, and finally answer, yes, they are. This is something we have not seen in the theatre. But ask me why, and what the secret is, and I begin to shirk that too, preferring to nag away at other trifles—why, for instance, the hypnotic realism of *The Cherry Orchard* suffered a birdsong effect achieved by short, repetitive cadences of axle-squeaks; why the military band of the departing garrison in *The Three Sisters* was so shamelessly a gramophone in the wings, and seemed to spend so long in the vegetable garden on the other side of the Prozorov residence. These minor puzzles raise another: why were these failings utterly unimportant? We did not say at the



[*The Three Sisters*

CHEBUTIKIN—*Alexis Gribov* VERSHININ—*Pavel Massalsky*
MASHA—*Margarita Yurieva*

time "Someone ought to fiddle that band record to get a wind-borne music effect"; we said "The band is very near; it must have stopped in the next street." On Chebutikin's exit in Act Three some insensitive member of the audience tried to start a round of applause. Since every exit of every player deserved the same, this was silly, to say the least (though Chebutikin was drunk, a notably applause-bidding condition with audiences); but that is beside the point, which is that the rest of us sustained a severe nervous shock; the real world of the stage had possessed us absolutely, and was now shattered by the unreality of a woman in evening dress banging her hands together.

Still the real question remains unanswered. How is it done? Glancing at my watch during the final applause to see if I could get the ten twenty-five from Victoria, I found that it was already eleven o'clock. And this after not understanding a word spoken, Nitchevo and Moscow excepted, since seven.

How much of *The Three Sisters* sticks in the mind afterwards? In detail, surprisingly little. The extinguishing of the lamps in Act Three and, as the last went out, the gauzy grey daylight creeping into command, shaming every epithet ever devised to paint the dawn. Irina's wan face peeping from her bed to end the scene with her cry, already losing hope, for Moscow and Life. The first act luncheon party; its rowdy gaiety as eleven players laughed, chattered, poured wine, handed dishes and clattered cutlery, each in scrupulously sustained character, the grouping and movement so drilled that any momentary glance at that part of the stage—the luncheon party had no help from Chekov: the only written lines were for Andrey and Natasha, down-stage, apart, and with not a syllable lost in the disciplined din from the party—presented a picture perfectly composed at any moment. The avenue of silver birches in the fourth act's bright autumn garden, and later, the three sisters, alone again, grouped and regrouped in shifting triangles closing in to a triptych as the curtain falls on Olga's "Oh, if only we knew, if only we knew!"

If only we did. For these remembered bits and pieces are no clue. Memories as sharp have stayed with us from the Old Vic or Stratford, or even the West End. What is harder to remember is an evening when the play drew us into its innermost self from start to finish and released us not knowing what magic had been worked, or how, and murmuring, like any character recovering consciousness in our own theatre, "Where am I?"

To dodge the big question still, and to say no more about *The Three Sisters* than I have said (which, looking back, seems to be not much), this second play from Moscow rams home the lesson taught by the first: that anyone missing a chance to visit Sadler's Wells during the next three weeks may never live it down. *Godot* may have been a conversational necessity for a season: these productions and performances—accepting that they *are* produced and performed and not transported all of a piece from some celestial repertory—may remain one for a lifetime.

The Birthday Party, at the Lyric, Hammersmith, is a masterpiece of meaningless significance by a new young writer. Mr. Harold Pinter has gifts for dialogue, character and the dramatic moment, but all will be wasted until he condescends to give his audience at least a bare hint of what he is trying to say.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

For some good comedy thrills and Wilfrid Hyde White, *Not in the Book* (Criterion—16/4/58); for good performances, including Vivien Leigh's, in a psychological melodrama, *Duel of Angels* (Apollo—30/4/58); *Expresso Bongo* (Saville—30/4/58) probes the pop cult; for simple, middlebrow laughter, *Breath of Spring* (Cambridge—2/4/58).

J. B. BOOTHROYD

AT THE PICTURES

Stage Struck—Windjammer

"PHOTOGRAPHED entirely in New York City," says a note at the beginning of *Stage Struck* (Director: Sidney Lumet)—and this fact turns out, I think, to be remarkably important. From the first moment when we see Eva (Susan Strasberg) wandering fascinated through the streets among the lighted theatres, the feeling of place, of that particular district, is a most powerful factor in the film's effect. The fact that the snow in some of the later scenes is obviously real, and that the breath of people talking in the open clouds the cold air—this is the sort of thing I would usually be inclined to criticize as a distracting curiosity, but here this too seems right.

At the root of the story is the Cinderella formula, and plenty of the audience are content to take it on those simple terms, as it were forcing it into the cliché pattern by emphasizing with their laughter and appreciation only those more obvious points that usually appear in the Cinderella story. But here, in spite of its sentimental basis, is a thoroughly intelligent bit of work, full of subtleties and throwaway effects that it is a delight to catch. It is far more than the story of a stage-struck girl and how she achieves her ambition to become a New York leading lady. It is essentially a satirical, observant picture of a world, the world of the theatre. It is not so much that the details are used to illustrate her story, as that her story is used as a base for the larger portrait.

It is brilliantly done. The script itself (Ruth and Augustus Goetz, from a play by Zoe Akins) is full of comic invention, but what I found specially impressive was the director's imaginative style. I remember one little scene that combines (as a film ideally should) appeal to the eye with appeal to the ear and to the mind, so that the simultaneous impressions result in a unique experience. We are in a car driving to an after-theatre party: through the windscreen, as the



Eva Lovelace—SUSAN STRASBERG [*Stage Struck*

wipers wave across it, we see the mess of dazzling colour in the wet streets, while we half-hear, mingled with music and city sounds, the voice of a companion in the car eagerly reading out bits of the just-published notices of the play. And this is not mere decoration: it establishes and conveys the mood of that moment, which has its place just there in the narrative and in what I have called the portrait.

There are innumerable brief scenes no less effective that it would take just as much space to describe, as well as far more elaborate and intricate group scenes—parties, for instance—organized with very great skill and jewelled with perceptive detail. Miss Strasberg is perfect as the starry-eyed girl, the focus of the story, and the other principals (Henry Fonda as a producer, Joan Greenwood as a flamboyant actress, Christopher Plummer as a young playwright, Herbert Marshall as the kindly voice of experience) are excellent in their several ways; but the point of this most enjoyable piece is not the interaction of character or the succession of events but its picture of the circumstances, the world in which they happen.

Windjammer (Directors: Louis de Rochemont III and Bill Colleran) is a production in "Cinemiracle," still another of those processes the aim of which is to make the audience feel that it is literally in the picture—an aim that has about as much to do with real film-making as the *trompe-l'œil* or the tin fly on the lump of sugar has to do with art. The effect is very like that of Cinerama, the screen being obviously a triptych with noticeable seams. The film is a travelogue, showing the voyage of the three-masted Norwegian training ship Christian Radich across the Atlantic by way of Madeira and Puerto Rico and Trinidad to New York and back, with an earnestly playful commentary (very reminiscent of an article in a school magazine) as if by one of the cadets on board. There are many magnificent sights in splendid Eastman Colour, well worth seeing, and there is "seven-track hi-fi sound"; but does this sort of thing give you so much more than straightforward colour photography gives you? As with Cinerama, what impresses the audience most is a simple physical sensation—induced by mounting the camera on one of the "basket sleighs" in Madeira and whooshing down a cobbled street.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

With *A Dangerous Age* (21/5/58) at the Academy is a brightly-coloured French squib about a stranded theatrical company, *It Happened in Aden*: artificial, quite entertaining—the French saying "Oo la la" with an English accent. Nothing really outstanding left in London, but *The Young Lions* (7/5/58) continues, and *The Sheepman* (14/5/58), and there's always *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57).

Best release: *The Sea Wall* (14/5/58), visually beautiful and otherwise striking. *Dunkirk* (2/4/58) I'm afraid I wasn't keen on.

RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Jacqueline at Play

JACQUELINE MACKENZIE has in her favour a merry, knowing look, crisp, precise diction, an appearance fresh as sliced cucumber, and an inexhaustible self-possession. (Even during the most pitiably ham-fisted passages of kindergarten humour in the series called "Trouble for Two" (BBC) this latter quality has never once deserted her: I was almost persuaded, while watching the scene in the crowded bus in the first episode, that she herself actually believed it to be funny.) But a comic needs more attributes than these if she is to triumph over a script that seems to have been left over from some would-be madcap British film scenario of the very early 'thirties: and I begin to doubt if Miss Mackenzie has them. The pulling of funny faces is not enough, nor is the making of elaborate (and sometimes cryptic) gestures. They served in the days when Miss Mackenzie was engaged as TV's visual counterpart of those pieces of wickedly witty weekly-paper reportage: but they would quickly pall in a strip-cartoon entertainment like "Trouble for Two," even if the script sparkled with humour. Are we to understand that it may sparkle later? In any case I believe that Miss Mackenzie is out of place here, as I believed her to be out of place as the juvenile in the television version of Drinkwater's *Bird in Hand*. She is a solo act—a voluble describer of things seen—the apotheosis of that woman we all know, the one who has everyone in stitches describing people she met at the whist drive—catty and mischievous—an eagle-eyed observer—an entertainer uniquely of television. Should she not have continued along those lines? She was inclined to go on and on a bit, and sometimes she tried just a fraction too hard, and too often she relented and was kind to the poor little victim after all: but this was her line of country and she ruled in it unchallenged. Outside it I'm afraid she'll lose her way.

James Parish's "Truth about Melandrinos" (ABC) serial has proceeded along familiar lines, but I have had more enjoyment from it than I had hoped—partly because of dialogue often above the thriller standard, partly because of a splendidly smooth, believable performance from George Baker. How rare it is to see an actor who can play a straight part as a real, live person!

For an example of actors at play, by the way, I recommend "Sword of Freedom" (ATV), in which a picturesquely costumed group led by Edmund Purdom have a splendid time hamming



JACQUELINE MACKENZIE

up some weirdly swashbuckling yarns "set against the romantic background of Florence." I fancy they love every minute of it.

The "Birds' Nest Soup" episode from "The Borneo Story" (BBC) remains in my mind as one of the most awe-inspiring documentaries I have seen on television, and I was delighted to learn that it had received an award. The technical difficulties involved in producing this macabre piece of nature-study-cum-gourmet's-nightmare were surely incredible. (It showed the collection, from the roof of a vast, stinking, bat-ridden Sarawak cave, of the glutinous spittle with which swifts stick their nests together. This is eventually made into the expensive birds'-nest soup of China.) Sometimes even now, before I sleep, I hear ghostly twitterings from that inaccessible giant's cavern full of echoes. But the whole series was fascinating, and I look forward to more work of this kind from Hugh Gibb and Tom Harrisson.

Meanwhile, Armand and Michaela Denis are "On Safari" (BBC) yet again. In *Radio Times* dated May 9 there appeared a photograph of this indefatigable pair. It was posed, evidently in a studio, with considerable drama. Michaela, in a fetching shirt and beautifully groomed, looked out at some Nameless Horror of the Jungle. Armand held a camera in one hand, and with the other gripped Michaela's arm protectively. He looked stern and fearless. It was all beautifully lit. "Don't be afraid, little one," he seemed to say: "they're only stuffed."

HENRY TURTON

Essence of Parliament

MR. LENNOX-BOYD'S statement did not amount to much. It amounted indeed merely to a statement that there would not be a statement. The general impression is that the chances of obtaining a solution acceptable to both Greeks and Turks is almost negligible and therefore one asks whether it would not be better to take the plunge, and what is to be gained by interminable delay. Still, that is a matter that the Government must decide, and Mr. Callaghan for the Opposition showed restraint and statesmanship in recognizing as much and not pressing for a debate. Yet his restraint left the Parliamentary cupboard a bit bare. There was nothing but the Finance Bill. Finance Bill debates are intolerable unless there is some comic relief. The jokes do not have to be very good jokes. Indeed the simpler and the more hoary they are the better. A wise Chancellor would perhaps put a tax on mothers-in-law in every Budget and then take it off again just to help things along. There must be a funny man—or better still a funny woman. It was Mrs. Mann who saved the day this week. Cosmetics are almost as funny as mothers-in-law and perhaps funnier than gorgonzola cheese. She got into a wrangle with Mr. Burden about which cosmetics were a necessity and when, and Parliamentary Government was saved. False eyelashes were not necessary (*Laughter*). Artificial moustaches were not necessary. Look at Mr. Nabarro (*Renewed laughter*). Rouge was not necessary. Look at Mrs. Braddock. By this time Members were almost having kittens. There had been nothing like it since the Labour Government taxed (or perhaps exempted from taxation—I forget which) the travelling lavatory. A humorist has only to speak Scotch and to speak slowly and she is home. Sir Arthur Harvey thought that if Mrs. Mann did not like cosmetics she must be "completely out of touch with British women." I am not quite sure what being out of touch with British women may mean, but Mrs. Mann's argument had been not that women did not use cosmetics but that they did not need them. She may be right or she may be wrong, but it is going to be a sad day if Members are not even to be allowed to differ in taste from their fellow-citizens. And then, added Sir Arthur, British cosmetics are a good thing because we export a lot of them; that is in these days the real test of necessity. I do not know if in fact we export more cosmetics than we import. I should doubt it. But certainly a necessity in the modern economics is a commodity which a foreigner consumes. Move everything round from the country in which it is produced to the next country and then all the trade figures are up and everybody is pleased. It was all good fun, and the House was so astonished at finding a Finance Bill funny that the Chancellor was left with nothing to reply to, and they quite forgot to divide on the clause.

With such a start the House was almost back in the travelling lavatory world and was happily able to remain substantially there for the rest of the week. Mr. Rankin was anxious to discover the difference between a hearse and a hearsette—the one liable to tax and the other not—and Mr. Hector Hughes, with a glint of more romantic adventure in his eye, and Aberdonian constituents, wanted to know all about "the giant-sized, webbed claw of a prehistoric monster" at Loch Ness and whether something could not be made out of it. Mr. Maclay thought it was "like an alligator's foot, possibly stuffed." So opinions differed.

PERCY SOMERSET



"What d'you want unfrozen for lunch?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Letters addressed to the Editor, unless specifically marked otherwise, may be considered for publication.)

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—Your "In the Country" contributor, Philip Holland, wrote about snails on the North Downs. In similar country near Hildesheim we have recently captured many snails of a similar type. Though Mrs. Beeton gives two recipes for cooking snails, neither of them helps in the second step, how to kill them before covering with salt and water.

As we have forty days' starvation to come before the question arises could Mr. Holland advise us on (*a*) how to keep them during these days; (*b*) how to do the preliminaries, and any other good ideas on cooking.

Yours faithfully,
D. W. REID (Col.)

Hildesheim, Rhine District East

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—I wonder whether any of your readers are able to confirm the attribution, by Percy Somerset, to the late Lord Birkenhead of a verbatim passage from Groucho Marx's address to the jury in *Duck Soup*—"Gentlemen of the jury, my client looks like an idiot and he talks like an idiot, and he behaves like an idiot. But, gentlemen of the jury, do not allow yourselves to be deceived. Gentlemen of the jury, my client is an idiot."

Yours, etc.,
M. F. CULLIS

Copenhagen

To the Editor of Punch

SIR,—Referring to your article "Up and Down for the Cup," you ask, what are Harrods doing? Since 1894 the Harrodian Club, which is the Sports and Social Club for the members of the staff of Harrods, have been playing football. As recently as last Easter the football team visited Belgium, playing two matches. During the Season 1957-8 the club turned out four and sometimes five teams every Saturday afternoon. Teams were entered in the junior and senior divisions of the Hammersmith Six-a-Side Contest. Result, Seniors—runners-up, Juniors—winners. The club have also won another competition and been runners-up in two others.

Yours faithfully,
B. A. STOKER

Harrodian Club, S.W.1

FOR WOMEN



L'Ecole de Mannequins

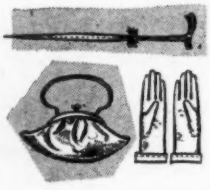
PARIS, *May 21*

MODELS are formed, not born. From the raw material to the finished article the process at the Ecole Parisienne de Mannequins ("the only professional school of its kind in France") takes two months. The course comprises, besides the wearing of clothes with casual elegance, gait, deportment, pose, poise, gesture, the cultivation of natural charms and attributes, the polished handling of accessories, the art of make-up and of hair-dressing, physical culture, dietetics, the harmonizing of body and mind, *savoir-vivre*.

The Ecole is directed by a young woman of daunting poise, Mademoiselle Varell, who (in a Hi-Fi sheath) did me the honours of a house from which some of the world's most famous models have stepped out—head erect, shoulders down, seat well in, to face the salons of the Haute Couture, the camera, the unseen menace of TV audiences.

I will spare readers the spade-work drill (except to warn them that, according to Mademoiselle Varell, ninety per cent of us walk with bent knees which not only gives us a shambling gait but takes inches off our height) and hasten on to the finer points of everyday behaviour—the art of coping with accessories, for instance.

You would never believe how many *wrong* things you can do with a bag. Had you ever thought that the bag should always be slung on the left arm, never on the right one? And that, by passing the hand and forearm through the handles from the *outside*, inwards, the bag automatically takes up its correct position bumping up against the rear of the left hip? This simple manœuvre also encourages the hand to hang in a graceful, relaxed *downward* position—that is if it is not cluttered up with a string bag, the dog's lead and the pram.



Umbrellas are another pitfall in the path of true elegance. Should you use your umbrella to walk with, then it is imperative *to walk past it* in two or three easy steps. To let your umbrella keep ahead of you is fatal. Far better leave it in the bus.

To the problem of putting on and taking off gloves the Ecole has brought the full weight of its experience. "When putting on gloves the arms should be held forward, well away from the body, in a graceful, rounded movement. First the fingers should be smoothed into position; then the thumb. To bring the wrist into place the thumb of the helping hand should be slipped well up inside the palm and the glove drawn gently into position."

Clenched teeth or the underarm grip as aids to taking off gloves are discouraged. With the arms still in that free, rounded, forward movement you first ease out the thumb, then, in one debonair movement, *all the fingers together* (not one at a time, you sluts) in a graceful, parting movement of the hands.

And the thing about all this is that you must never *look* at your accessories whilst battling with them. Umbrellas must be unrolled, put up, put down, gloves put on and off, bags clasped, buttons buttoned and unbuttoned with an air of complete *détachement*. I suggest that the best way to complete mastery for the average woman is to practise blindfolded. Or in the dark.

PHYLLIS HEATHCOTE

☆

Sill Life

FANCY (writes Mary Porage, our maladjusted home expert), when I was telling you about your Dream Kitchen Come True I quite left out that very important bit, the window-sill over the sink!

Go here for Traditional Contemporary. It will give you, every single time you wash up, a wonderful feeling of "belonging" and is quite inexpensive to achieve. First wipe the surface clean, then sprinkle with some good washing-powder (a blue one looks ever so pretty). Now dip the bottom of the packet in water to render it nice and soggy and place it in the *right*-hand corner of the sill. (For some odd reason psychologists think you don't get nearly the same cosy "in it together" feeling if the packet is on the *left*!) If by any strange chance it doesn't overbalance immediately, give it a tiny push and send it reeling against the wall!

With a tall cardboard tin of Gritto and a jam-jar of washing-up mops, bottle-brushes and old rulers you have the basic "skyscraper" line or what looms through kitchen windows at passers-by. But of course it's the details, the things the people on the pavement *can't* see, that give a sill its delightfully "established" air. You even have some

choice here, because an orange-squash bottle-cap is every bit as Traditional Contemporary as a lemon-squash one. Choose whichever gives you the right reaction, i.e. dim wonderment if the grocer needed it back with the empties. Then would you rather have a grey or brown crayon pencil stump? Name-tape or wing-nut? Front cover of Ordnance Survey map or tea-packet Nature card of long-eared fruit-bat? Group prettily and dust with Gritto. No choice about that half-bit of spring type clothes-peg—it's a must! It's even got to be the half with a spring on! You see, whenever you so much as train a tap-jet on the back of a spoon that peg will remind you, oh so whimsically, of a winning bit of wishbone, and that's just what the social researchers mean by "belonging"—having the same darned useless thoughts as 5,999,999 other over-educated women 31,206 times a year!

For floral decoration, place a tangerine-pip last December in a small flower-pot and pack with heavy clay, bone dry.

ANGELA MILNE

☆

Hot Day

BRING me this morning bright
My bare-topped full-below
Dress on whose background (white)
Great cabbage roses grow;

Sandals that cut my flesh
With fiendish little straps;
A beach-bag; gloves of mesh;
A tiny hat perhaps,

The one on which I've put
Flowers and a veil, for best;
There! Now from head to foot
I am correctly dressed—

For what? The sea, with hopes
Of motoring up to eat
At Marlow? No, you dopes,
Shopping in Oxford Street.

ANDE

☆

Tangled Web?

"The Essex Guild of Artist Craftsmen is holding its annual exhibition at Leytonstone Branch Library.

Here Mrs. C. Auton, of Chigwell, shows 20-year-old Janet Thompson, an assistant librarian, of Theydon Bois, how to weave with an old spinning wheel."

Picture caption, Evening Standard

Mummies and Movement

JUMP up, Mummies! This is running music. Run about all over the house as fast as you can. The milk is boiling over, the bath-water's up to the top, there's a frightful smell of burning, the dog's been sick, the iron's on fire. Run like anything, from the baby howling on the sofa to the maniac ringing the front door bell, down two flights of stairs to rescue the washing, up again to the baby who's fallen on his head. Run, run—now stop. Did you run, Mummies? Did you? Good.

Try to make yourself as tall as you can. Stretch up and up and up and up and up. See if you can reach that saucepan on the top shelf without actually dropping the baby or knocking the tray off the sink. Now be as short as short. Feel you are grovelling on the floor picking up rattles, biscuits, shattered china, bootees, bibs—you are? Well done, Mummies.

Let's see if you can make yourself a *strong* shape, a big, strong shape, to straighten out the baby who is bent backwards into a cast-iron hoop and wrestle him into his dolly-sized clothes. Now be a floppy shape. Just flop down anywhere. Let yourself go. Never mind the milkman, the char, the dusting, the dinner, Daddy.

Spread out, Mummies, spread out everywhere, all over the sitting room. Rusks on the mantelpiece, nappies on the wireless, bottle in the fireplace, shawls on every chair, baby powder by the telephone where you took it to answer that kindly soul who never fails to ring up when you're in the thick.

Now sit quietly (it's not for long) and listen to this lovely silence. What do you think it is telling you? Has the baby stopped breathing, choked himself on a fluffy hygienic toy, twined himself up in a Laocoön of cellular blankets, died of a surfeit of tepid groats?

Show me how you can creep. Creep, creep into the bedroom, not a sound, little mice, no light, don't breathe, shoes off, get Daddy to creep too, blast those people upstairs, creep to open the window, creep into bed . . .

Pretend you're a bird, a cloud, a tree, a nutmeg-grater, the dome of St. Paul's—absolutely anything but a Mummy.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

☆

H'm

"He has a romantic bow-fronted office in a little court off St. Martin's Lane and here he mixes antique and modern furnishings. He sat in a Regency armchair, and I had a modern affair . . ."

Alice Hope's Home Column, Daily Telegraph





Sparklers and Grinders

THE diamond industry is one of the best hi-fi amplifiers of the prevailing economic theme. When prospects look uncertain and profits are declining, the first thing on which man economizes—mean fellow that he is—is jewels for his women. The curve in the sale of gems throughout the ages is identical with the curves of the business cycle.

The relation between the state of industrial activity and the diamond industry is even more direct than this. For many years past diamonds have been increasingly used as grinders as well as sparklers, i.e. as abrasives in cutting machines. The harder the steels and other materials used in modern industry, the greater the need for diamonds, the hardest material of them all, to deal with the new alloys. In 1938 the amount realized by sales of industrial stones through the De Beers organization (which handles 80 per cent of the free world's diamonds) was a few hundred thousand pounds. In 1957 it had risen to just on £24 million and represented 30 per cent of the total sales of diamonds.

The 1957 totals for sales of gems and industrial stones were all-time records, but only by virtue of the tremendous performance put up in the first part of the year. Mr. Harry Oppenheimer, the new chairman of De Beers Consolidated Mines, admitted recently that towards the end of the year there was a marked falling off in demand. The culprits, he said, were the economic recession in the United States which had affected the demand for gems, and the cessation of stockpiling of industrial stones in which the U.S. took a lead which was promptly followed by others.

Diamonds are the perfect illustration for those who want to argue the case for monopoly; and even for those who abhor monopolies, diamonds must rank as the one exception that proves the rule of their free-for-all convictions. Their value depends so much on scarcity, the demand for them can be so fickle that only a closely controlled selling organization can match supply to demand and achieve that balance of the market which will ensure reasonable stability of prices. The existing monopoly has recently been threatened from three quarters: illicit mining and sales from Sierra Leone, alleged new discoveries in Soviet Russia, and the much fanfared achievement of the General Electric Company of the United States in producing synthetic diamonds.

Sierra Leone is one part of the world where diamonds have recently been found without much difficulty in shallow alluvial deposits. Production there is still large but is declining, and the native diggers who used to sell illicitly to dealers from neighbouring Liberia are now tending once again to channel the stones they find to the recognized agents of the Diamond Corporation.

The Russians have recently been letting out loud claims about phenomenal discoveries of diamonds in Siberia. When it comes to action, however, the Russians continue to be considerable buyers of industrial stones and have provided far and away the biggest offtake in the black market supplied by Sierra Leone. It may be that the gentlemen in Moscow are by their claims trying to play the market and apply to it the techniques of psychological warfare in which they are such past masters.

There is little danger so far from the synthetic stones that have emerged from the G.E.C. crucibles. It needs vast pressures and unbelievably high temperatures to make diamonds (that is how the natural articles were created in the fiery cones of volcanic eruptions æons ago). What has been achieved industrially so far is but the coarsest of industrial stones, a very costly and poor imitation of nature.

De Beers deferred shares are the outstanding diamond investment. They have had their ups and downs. They are now down, and on the basis of the last dividend they yield more than 10 per cent. They look as attractive as the sparklers they produce.

LOMBARD LANE

* * *



The Right Pitch

SOPHISTICATION has reached even our village cricket ground. It is two years now since whites, top and bottom, became *de rigueur* for our side, and last year we went one better and put up sheets on posts at each end of our ground, which we called sight screens. It made the ground look very smart, but it also suddenly made us aware that the pitch was a real shocker.

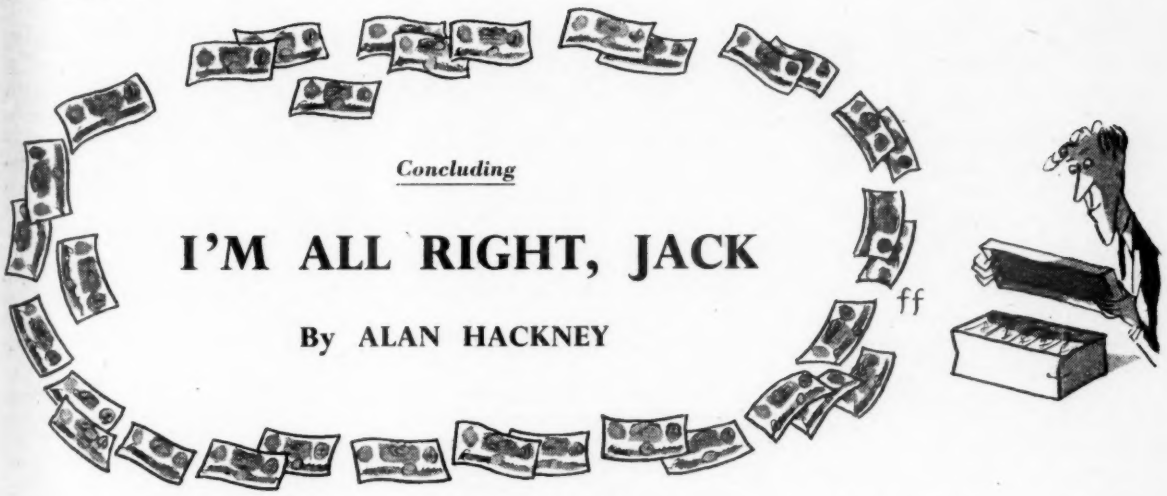
The climax came when Hockleigh, the Harrow to our Eton, let it be known that they could find plenty of opponents elsewhere if we really expected them to play cricket on a dirt track. Something had to be done fast. Chandos, our go-ahead skipper, appointed a ground improvement committee under our wicket-keeper, Fred Thatcher, who had more to gain than most from pacifying the wicket. Fred had scored some spectacular stumpings with deadly throws from five yards out—but he had had more misses. Chandos now saw him crouching over the stumps like Godfrey Evans.

The committee worked like blacks. After marling and weeding and watering and mowing and rolling for weeks on end our old pitch had become as docile as a lamb, and in our first matches this season the low-numbered batsmen always made more runs than the tail, just like properly ordered county cricket. Fred was a hero.

News of his feat travelled. Chandos kept finding people here and there who now wanted to play for our side, and we all admired their flowing drives. Word got round that Hockleigh were packing their side; one of the players they were bringing, it was said, had once played for Berkshire. Chandos quickly retaliated. He was sure Fred wouldn't mind standing down just this once, as it was vital to have a proper wicket-keeper for such an important match.

The proper wicket-keeper, whose Harlequin cap stroked the stumps as he squatted behind them, had a new experience that day. He let through twenty-three byes. Just how Fred managed to restore so much of the pitch's pristine venom in a few short days I have never yet been able to discover. But we don't aspire to a Test-Match wicket any more—and we get on with our game without any intruders.

GREGORY BLAXLAND



Concluding

I'M ALL RIGHT, JACK

By ALAN HACKNEY

An arms contract for the Agyppian Government has been transferred from Missiles Ltd. to Shipshape Harpoons Ltd. by a financial juggle which benefits Bertram Tracepurcel, a Missiles director; Cox, Shipshape Harpoons director; and Mahommed, Agyppian representative in Britain. Stanley Windrush, Tracepurcel's nephew, who had just got a job at Missiles, started trade union trouble by working too quickly. Stanley wanted to marry Cynthia Kite, the shop steward's daughter, for whom Cox has arranged a television engagement.

IN the suburbs, at Shipshape Harpoons Ltd., the production run for the Agyppian rockets was getting fairly smoothly under way. After the small-batch production of harpoons, javelins for Olympic teams and seasonal runs of fireworks in the autumn months, it was a pleasurable challenge to the management to have a good steady month's run at full capacity, and the prospect of further orders from a satisfied foreign customer, supposing this run went to plan. New life-blood had been injected into the firm at just the right time. The shares rocketed up.

Stanley had just sat down to write a letter to his father when the telephone summoned him.

"Mr. Windrush? This is the Features Editor of the *Daily Rapid*."

"Oh yes. Yours is the paper that's saluting me. What can I do for you?"

"Well, Mr. Windrush, the proprietor's very keen on running a series on strikes and how they affect the ordinary worker in industry. A rush job, starting to-morrow, and what we'd like is an article by you—human interest—just as the common man struggling to get on and work your way up but kept down by restrictive practices and so forth. You with me?"

"I think so."

"Right. Now, I daresay you haven't done any writing and we'll send a man along to help you get straight on with it. O.K.? I take it you're quite free at the moment?"

"Yes. Pretty well, but——"

"To be finished this evening and trimmed up a bit so we can put it in to-morrow while the thing's still hot. Okay?"

"We-e-ell, I——"

"Say a hundred pounds?"

"Oh. Well, I'm a bit short of money, so——"

"Two hundred and fifty, then. Six hundred words, certainly not more than eight, and signed by you. I'll send a man down straight away to help you on with it."



"Well, I'll certainly accept that," said Stanley. "Only I'd rather do it myself and get it to you by when? Six?"

"Five. And come straight up to sign the usual agreement. That's just a line or two, allowing us to make necessary alterations. All right?"

"In here a minute, Roger," said the Features Editor down the telephone when Stanley had delivered his rambling and quite unsuitable account of his happy times at Missiles. "And bring in that article you wrote for Windrush. I've got his here so you can put in a bit or two from it."

My dear Father (Stanley had written), *I was going to write to you and make my position clear, but I've done it in detail for the* Daily Rapid. *See to-morrow's paper.*

The article actually appeared the following Monday, in the middle pages, under the large heading "A WORKER PROTESTS. STOP THIS FOLLY *by* STANLEY WINDRUSH." Near the top of the page there was one of the pictures taken at the door some days previously, made composite by using Stanley's head and neck with the chest of a pair of overalls, Stanley's dressing-gown having been air-brushed out.

"That's odd," thought Stanley, reading the first paragraph. "This isn't what I wrote."

He was astounded at how the article read. Whereas he had written of his

© Alan Hackney 1958

becoming a factory worker because of a crying need, and of how he had been well treated and only sent to Coventry because of a misunderstanding, and how he intended to marry his shop steward's daughter, the article gave a far different impression.

"*I protest.*" it began. "*Why do I work? To earn money. To save up and get married. But my trade union, GEEUPWOA, which has a national membership of two and a quarter million, is holding me back. I cannot work because they are on strike. Why? I do not understand it. I want to get back to work but I would lose my card. Up till now I have been fairly treated.*"

Further on it became even more unfamiliar.

"*Industry was crying out, I was told. For men. So I began working in industry. I seemed to be getting on very well. I was going to marry the shop steward's daughter.*" (Here reference was made to a footnote in heavy type reading: "William Kite, Chairman of GEEUPWOA's local local Strike Committee. Member of Communist Party. Seen recently on TV.")

Stanley telephoned the Features Editor.

"Ah, Mr. Windrush. You got your cheque?"

"Yes, thank you, but this article—hardly any of it is my stuff. What's the idea?"

"All that's been added is certain objective facts, Mr. Windrush, and material from observations made by you to our reporter the other day. All right?"

"No, it isn't. What about '*After only a fortnight at the job I was able to work twice as fast as the others'?*"

"Yes, that was information you gave our reporter. You *did* say you paid in your cheque, didn't you?"

Looking over the article again, it became clear to Stanley that there was no future for him now at Missiles, or indeed anywhere else as a member of GEEUPWOA. Nor would any other union be likely to give him a card, or collect dues from him on a Friday.

The telephone rang again and it was Knowlesy.

"You shouldn't have written all that, squire," said Knowlesy.

"I didn't," said Stanley.

"It won't suit Kitey to believe that," said Knowlesy.

Taking it all round, Stanley was glad he had decided against applying for his strike pay on the Friday.

There was, however, still the question of Cynthia.

As Mr. Kite would not let him visit Cynthia at home, Stanley thought, he must ring up the Variety Department of the B.B.C. to find out where the girls rehearsed, and see Cynthia there.

The B.B.C. said that the rehearsals



for "Name Your Poison," the show in which Cynthia was dancing, were being held at the Palmerston Boys' Club in Chiswick, an unlikely place, but one often used because of the shortage of rehearsal rooms in Central London. Stanley found it after some difficulty, and no one took much notice of him when he went in.

There were a large number of technical fellows in shirtsleeves, bandsmen, and several despairing script-writers slumped in parish-hall chairs along one wall. Somewhat to Stanley's disappointment the dancing girls were not in uniform but trousers, with pullovers or blouses. They had just finished a routine and were all panting speechlessly. Various ropes hung from the ceiling. Cynthia, he noticed at last, was sagging on a vaulting horse.

"I must see you, Cynthia," he said. "I've got enough money to set up house. Isn't it splendid? Now, what about it?"

Cynthia shook her head, still gasping for breath.

"Two minutes, girls!" called a voice. Groans went up from one or two corners.

"Well, Cynthia? Do speak to me."

Cynthia wiped the sweat from her brow and puffed.

"I can't," she got out. "Won't have us if we're married. Might spoil our figures."

"Oh, surely you could give it up?"

"Don't want to. Signed. Contract. Anyway."

"Let's have you, girls!"

"Please, Cynthia. Why not?"

"Don't want to give it up." (*Pant*) "Don't want to marry you either."

"Oh."

"Places please, girls!"

"No. Must think of my career."

"But. Cynthia——"

"No. I like dancing. I don't like you. Sorry. 'Bye."

"O.K. girls." The number started.

Stanley watched despondently for a little while, until the movements spread across the gymnasium floor and enveloped him.

Stanley turned at the door but Cynthia shook her head energetically at him and he went sadly away.

When Stanley got in he found Uncle Bertram and Cox waiting for him.

"Well, Stanley. Let's come to it straight away," said Bertram. "Things are looking a bit serious."

"You don't know how serious," said Stanley. "I'm in bad with my union and look here, Cox, you've done for me with Cynthia, filling her head with this gallivanting. She's thrown me over. I'm ruined. I just don't know which way to turn."

"Kuh," said Cox, surprised. "Poor old Stan. Fancy young Cynthia doing that."

Uncle Bertram cleared his throat.

"Perhaps we'd better not go into all that now," he said. "The big thing at the moment is that this strike is spreading. There are five thousand out in Manchester and another two thousand in Leeds, not to mention Scotland and Wales. It's got to stop before it becomes nation-wide. If you're not quick about it you're going to paralyse the country."

"Me? And quick about what?"

"Oh yes, *you* my old Stan," confirmed Cox. "You ask anyone who reads the papers who the strike's over and they'll say you."

"So you see it's up to you to put matters right," resumed Uncle Bertram. "You've got to nip smartly along to Missiles to-morrow and resign. Ask for your cards. Otherwise half the working population of the country will be out idle. But if you resign you remove the root cause of it all and the whole thing can be settled."

"It's not much to ask, is it, Stan boy?" said Cox. "All you got to do is hand in your resignation with a lot of publicity."

"Well, that's exactly what Hitchcock asked me to do and I refused."

"Ah, but he couldn't make it worth your while, my old Stan, and I could."

"Perhaps you could, but why should you?"

"Well," Cox coughed discreetly, "if it becomes nation-wide they wouldn't work at *my* firm, Shipshape Harpoons, and then there'd be hell to pay. I got a contract to do. So you will go and do it, won't you?"

"I don't know. The *Daily Rapid* paid me two hundred and fifty pounds for blighting my future and I don't think it was worth it."

"Certainly it wasn't, Stan boy," agreed Cox. "If you go and resign, and stop *my* future being blighted, I'll give you twenty-five hundred. Cash, naturally."

"I've got to live on something," sighed Stanley. "Thanks very much."

In the morning, however, Stanley had still not made up his mind. The collaboration of Cox and his Uncle Bertram seemed somehow fishy, but though he felt uneasy, he could not quite put his finger on what was illegal about it.

The newspaper announced:

FOUR MILLION IDLE.
ALL GEEUPWOA AND ANTEGS
OUT IN SYMPATHY TO-DAY.

Cox telephoned.

"Stan mate, you *got* to do it."

"I'm on my way," said Stanley.



The picket at the main gate of Missiles Ltd. firmly refused to let Stanley go in, so he drove round the corner and waited sadly for Mr. Hitchcock to come out, not daring to go away for fear of missing him. He sat there, getting steadily hungrier, until the middle of the afternoon when he saw the Personnel Manager's car come out and go past. Tooting his horn, he set off in pursuit.

For some time, Mr. Hitchcock did not respond. He could not see the bubble-car in his driving mirror. At last Stanley came alongside him at some traffic lights and made it known that he wanted to speak.

Mr. Hitchcock pulled up again beyond the lights and got out.

"Sir," said Stanley, clambering out of his cockpit, "I must see you. I want to hand in my notice."

"Oh, do you?" said Mr. Hitchcock. "Well, you've left it a bit bloody late. The whole industry's at a standstill. It's out of your hands now."

"Oh."

"What's more, *I'm* under notice because of all this. You see what you've done? Quite frankly, Windrush, you've acted like a sheer Charlie."

At Plantagenet House the Coloured Conference was witnessing the liveliest hour of its unprofitable life.

In ringing tones the Agyppian delegate, Mr. Mahommed, was denouncing the aggression of Solomonia, whose troops that morning had begun a most efficacious invasion. Reports were confused, but seemed to suggest that the capital, Rak, was already in the invaders' hands.

Bitterly, Mr. Mahommed laid the blame for this catastrophe at the door of Great Britain, whose failure to maintain a balanced supply of arms in the area, he claimed, had led to the present disgrace.

"I accuse Britain of this swindle," he cried. "It is old policy of divide and rule once more, with no thought for coloured peoples. Officials of the Foreign Office have not been able to conceal contempt, this is my personal experience here, and while we have been shown examples of Western know-how and so forth, the old game has gone on. Supply of arms for the defence of my country has been sabotaged by British Government using Communist agents to make strikes.

"And I accuse Emmanuel, representing Solomonia here, together with his government, of unprovoked attack on peace-loving peoples."

The Solomonian delegate rose to reply, pointing out that the Agyppians were far from peace-loving in their attitude to Solomonia.

"Large-scale arming in Agyppia has been well known to the world, as well as to my own government," he maintained. "Even the civilian population, including large group well known as Sons of Sunshine, and sometimes as Mahommed's Nature Boys, has been engaged for weeks in military drill. This was designed to wage war on neighbours,

and not for peaceful uses. The Agyptian delegate cannot deny this."

A note was handed to him.

"In addition to this," he continued, having read the note, "I must challenge the authority of Mr. Mahommed to speak, however persuasively, on behalf of his Government. The information which just reaches me is that his Government is no longer in power."

Mr. Mahommed got up and walked with his entourage out of the Conference.

Mr. Brimpton, the Minister of State, was missing this.

He sat in the House of Commons for Question Time, deputizing for the Foreign Secretary who was in America. The success of the Coloured Conference was going to be a vital step in his ascent to a peerage, and he listened with bored impatience to the replies of the Minister of Works. Minister of Labour next. Poor old Eldritch; in for a tough time over these strikes. He looked in a languid fashion at his Order Paper.

"32. Mr. Socket to ask the Minister of Labour whether he proposes to intervene in the current engineering strike, in particular to safeguard the interests of individuals wishing to pursue their normal employment, as in the case of Mr. Stanley Windrush?"

"Windrush?" thought Mr. Brimpton, "I seem to remember there was a chap at the Office . . ."

His thoughts were interrupted by an



urgent call from behind the Speaker's Chair.

Mr. Brimpton dashed to Plantagenet House, but before he arrived the Coloured Conference had finally and irreparably broken down.

Stanley sent in his resignation by post. There seemed to him to be no real place for him in the post-war world.

He packed his few belongings in his grip, and parcelled up Kitey's books still unread. These he left with Mildred, asking her to post them, for he was recognized everywhere he went now, and he hated the thought of stares in the post office.

So, declaring to the great-aunts that he was going away, Stanley pointed the bubble-car out of London.

"Well, Stanley," said his father, "it's nice to see you again. You look as if you could do with a bit of sun. What time do you aim to go back?"

"I don't think I am, father," said Stanley. "Do you mind?"

"My dear boy, not a bit," said his father. "I think you're very sensible."

They had a quiet meal together and watched the little world of Sunnyglade go by.

"You know," said his father, "we're starting a campaign to stop all these houses encroaching on us. Disgraceful. There's not much of Surrey left, you know."

"No, there isn't."

"Trouble is, everyone's very busy here, one way and another, and we haven't been able to get anyone to be secretary of it. I don't suppose you would?"

"Well, yes. In a day or two."

"Good. Ah, here comes the sun."

In a few days Mr. Mahommed joined the Sunnyglades community. He had asked for, and been granted, political asylum. His twenty-thousand-pound cut on the rocket contract would last him comfortably much longer than the two thousand five hundred Stanley received by parcel post from a grateful Cox.

(The End)



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The United Sua Betong Rubber Estates Limited

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF INDEPENDENT MALAYA

SIR JOHN HAY'S STATEMENT

The Forty-ninth Annual General Meeting of The United Sua Betong Rubber Estates, Limited is being held on June 4th. In his statement to stockholders the Chairman, Sir John Hay, writes:

The fall in the price of rubber may not be so steep as that experienced in other commodity markets but that is because natural rubber, in recent years, has not risen so high. The fall, however, has gone far enough to cut severely into our margin of profit. Events are too unpredictable to justify a firm expression of opinion regarding the future course of prices. The motor vehicle industry in America is particularly sensitive to any setback in trade and it is not expected that car production in 1958 will exceed 4½ million cars against over 6 million in 1957. On the other hand Europe, which is now a larger consumer of natural rubber than U.S.A., has so far shewn no contraction in demand. Russia and her satellites, as well as China, are now ranked as large consumers of natural rubber. We have not sufficient information upon which to base any estimate of their probable requirements for 1958. We proceed on the supposition that they will not fall below the amount taken in 1957 which was approximately 280,000 tons. Figures of exports from Indonesia for the first two months of this year show a decline of over 20,000 tons. If this trend were continued, it would prove an important set-off against a fall in consumption. Indonesia's need for foreign exchange however is so dire that despite internal strife a real effort will be made to maintain the production and export of rubber. In our attempt to translate these speculations into figures we arrive at the not too unsatisfactory conclusion that the production of natural rubber in 1958 may not exceed consumption by more than 60,000 tons with the former at 1,920,000 tons and the latter at 1,860,000 tons. It will be appreciated that any such figures must be received with reserve. The one certain fact is that unless rubber prices rise, of which at present there is little indication, our profits for the current year will fall substantially.

The new and independent Government of Malaya is to be congratulated on the success of its operations against terrorists and on the marked progress made towards the restoration of law and order. True, they have been greatly assisted in these operations by British troops but that is only an example of the benefits of friendly co-operation which, far from impairing the authority of the local Government, has strengthened and sustained it. This success, if followed up by a corresponding co-operation in the economic field, could be productive of immense benefits to Government and its people. The maintenance and improvement in the standards of living of a rapidly expanding population can only be provided by economic expansion necessitating a continuous flow of fresh capital which cannot be supplied internally. This matter was the subject of discussion at the fourteenth session of E.C.A.F.E., which met at Kuala Lumpur in March last. The group of companies of which this is an important member has demonstrated its confidence in Malaya in a practical manner. In the post-war years we have ploughed back over 100 million dollars which have been applied to extensions and replacements but, despite assurances of fair treatment for overseas capital, the general flow has been far from adequate to the country's needs. This is no doubt due in part to terrorist activities which have been, until recently, a feature of conditions in post-war Malaya as well as to more serious events in other Eastern territories. Economic considerations, however, have not been without their influence. Industries with which Malaya's name is publicly identified offer little scope for new entrants as capital costs are now too high to give hope of successful competition with existing enterprises. For example, it would cost about £250 per acre to plant and equip a new rubber estate as well as involve a denial of revenue for nearly a decade. Investment in established companies can be purchased at a fifth of that figure with a substantial immediate return. Similar conditions obtain in respect of other agricultural enterprises as well as to mining. These facts may point to the disagreeable conclusion that Malaya's industrial credit is low and that there is much need to encourage existing as well as new capital enterprises. Internally, the treatment of foreign capital has been fully in accordance with Government's assurances. Externally, an official tendency to discriminate has developed which tends to give the impression of an attitude of ambivalence to overseas capital, not well attuned to the needs of the situation. This would seem to be based on a misunderstanding of the obligations of capital domiciled here and carrying on operations in Malaya. Such business in its Eastern activities is generally conducted through the medium of subsidiary companies or managing agents. Either method permits of wide delegation of authority and provides an informed source from which guidance can be given to those at home respecting the manner in which their business should be conducted in conformity with the laws and customs of the country. Similar methods are employed throughout the world and are generally acceptable in all countries without any suggestion that they derogate from Government authority.

The transfer to Malaya of the head office of a company, the capital of which has been raised in the U.K., would in practice deprive the subscribers of their rights of ultimate control and on that ground would be resisted by them. Any attempt to influence such a movement would not only fail but would result in a serious check to even the present limited flow of capital. In this country there exists a fund of goodwill towards Malaya, which should be harnessed to profitable ends through free economic co-operation. It is a pity that the present should be chosen as an occasion for announcing officially that no resident in the U.K. will be invited to join the Malayan delegation to the Rubber Study Group, a forum for discussion of rubber problems in their international aspects. By this decision a large and important section of rubber producers are debarred from joining with representatives from many other countries in their studies. We, of course, recognise and accept the fact that the choice of the Malayan delegation is a matter wholly within the competence of the Government of that country. But in deciding on the composition of a delegation to an International Conference, concerned with the study of external problems more valid considerations than the accident of domicile might with advantage prevail. I have had a long association with Malaya and I am very mindful of the many courtesies and kindnesses that have been extended to me on my many visits. I would not venture on these remarks except I were prompted by friendly feelings and a desire for the welfare of the country.

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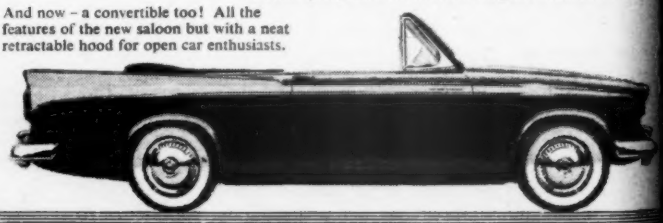
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